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The Sidelights of London



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Despised and Rejected of Men.

THE SIDELIGHTS OF LONDON. By J. A. R. Cairns

Author of "The Loom of the Law," etc. :: ::



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Dedication.

To

J. C.

A LITTLE TRIBUTE TO UNFAILING FRIENDSHIP

FOREWORD

THIS book is chaotic and full of incoherences. It is illogical, inconsistent, emotional and contradictory. Here and there it is vulgar, rash and lacking in respect. It is, perhaps, tender in some places, but in others it is reckless and regardless.

If my own estimate of the book is true then I am content, for it is an expression of the contradictions and moods of London, and it is of London that I write.

The stories that I heard ever so long ago lured me to her, and for nearly thirty years I have wandered by day and by night in the North and South, in the East and West. I have learnt to love her moods, her petulance, her waywardness, her follies and her frailties.

London is just the geographical name of seven millions of men and women and children ; each with a load, each with temptations, each with a quota of laughter and love and tears. I love London as an entity, and I make a large endeavour to see in each of her citizens, even it be a drab harlot in the dock, one of those of us who contribute some little note to London's symphony.

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THE SIDELIGHTS OF LONDON

CHAPTER I

LONDON'S SYMPHONY

MANY metaphors are used to express the various aspects and moods of London. It is said by those who are antipathetic to frivolity and sin that she is the "Modern Babylon." This metaphor is a corollary to May meetings and the collateral exhortations to virtue. In too intimate a scrutiny of "Modern Babylon" men of apostolic fervour have been misunderstood, and it is on record that the stories of their studies have been heard more than once in London Police Courts. Others viewing London from another angle employ the metaphors of science. She is a microcosm of the world, and in her streets are seen a vision of the millions of the human race of every colour, creed and quality.

She is called a panorama in which there can be seen the cross-currents of international problems and perplexities; the clearing-house of international commerce and finance. She is the citadel of the

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British race, the cradle of sane democracy and self-government, the ganglion of those free commonwealths that make up the British Empire.

London is the vatican of every profession. Whitehall is the appian way to every Civil servant, Fleet Street is the Mecca towards which every journalist hastens. Harley Street is a high altar to the student of every Medical School, and a metropolitan pulpit is the world's forum.

All these metaphors express aspects of London, but she has a thousand others. If one evangelist sees her as Babylon, another sees her as Pisgah's Heights. If one sinner finds her a temptress and a traitress, another finds her a consolation and the shadow of a great rock in a weary land. Some wanderers call her a stony-hearted stepmother, but to others she opens wide arms of welcome and she gathers her children into her warm embrace. London is the alma-mater of the English-speaking peoples.

There is need of some metaphor woven out of lights and shadows, out of things trivial and things majestic, that gives expression to each detail and sets each detail in right relation to every other. London is a Symphony. Every shade of joy and sorrow, failure and victory, dreams and graves, and death find expression in the unending melody of London. Mayfair and Millwall, Balham and Bethnal Green, Kensington and Poplar. Songs of labour and songs of leisure, hymns of hope and hymns of hate, tones of faith and tones of blind resignation, Soldiers' Songs of revolt and patriots' songs of battles fought and won.

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And there are joyous notes that gather up the laughter of children and happy homes and the love of lads and girls.

It is perhaps a fancy of mine as I watch the distant lights of London or walk by her crowded ways, but it seems to me that I listen to a symphony, some of which experience has taught me to understand. There are parts of it so dreadful that it makes me shudder and grow afraid ; there are parts so tender, so full of faith and hope and love that the music seems to be an echo of the golden harps of God.

There are seven notes in music, and it is the relation and inter-relation of these notes that makes music an expression of the gladness or the despair of the world.

The human emotions are no more numerous, and their expression takes countless shapes and forms in art and literature, in sacrifice and shame, in revolt and crime, in lust and murder and suicide. These are the movements of the Symphony.

And on the Bench of a Criminal Court one listens through the long days to all the lights and shadows of the Symphony. And at the end of the day and of many days one wonders at the skill of the great Master who is making out of confusion and conflicts a world of harmony as when the morning stars sang together.

Some worker, broken and disfigured, tosses in his fevered sleep and talks in wandering words of old friendships and anxieties, of joyous days that were interludes in his labours. The lights burn all night

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long in hospitals at Charing Cross, by Westminster Bridge and in the teeming slums at Whitechapel. This is the orchestration of Pain. Who can watch those twinkling lights unmoved by the pathos of the circumstances?

And there is the garish invitation of London's public palaces—great piles of granite or brick with every luxury that ministers to the flesh.

Here and there are the doss-houses of the wanderers, and in each man's face one can read something that adds its contribution to London's Symphony.

Some tell of revolt against the laws of man and the laws of God. There is the idler, the drunkard, the sensualist—strange musicians in the great orchestra. One man comes to his resting-place in the doss-house. What a contribution his is to the melody! He has climbed to strange heights of scholarship and attainment. He has consorted with the classics of Greece and Rome and been in intimate contact with the seers of Israel. He has read laws ancient and modern and he carries the imprimatur of his university in its Doctorate of Laws. He has been selling matches by a West End urinal all the long day and through the twinkling star-light of a London night.

He has fallen far—into the gutterway of the world. His face shows marks of conflict, confusion, but there are no lines of despair. Ah! that face speaks rather of triumph through submission. I think it is that, because I know his story though we had never met. And the sweep of the tide that washed him there was a combination of warm blood, outraged

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conventions and an unyielding pride. There was no outrage to morality, or to self-respect. That is a man who is not beaten. He consorts and sleeps beside the refuse of London, but in his own experience he finds the spirit that teaches him both tenderness and hope. And into the music of London he brings those strange, wild notes of a relentless Fate that dogs men and challenges their bravery.

Tired mothers watch by little children with lips moving in silent and challenging appeals to God's pity. Men in the shadows of death discover for the first time the unfathomable depths of love and the wonderful forgiveness of women. In some house of shame men and women are forgetful of the glorious sanctities of life, and they debase those bodies which are temples of the Holy Ghost. And now and then some maniac wild with lust does a deed of blood and into the symphony of London is woven the wild cry of a lost soul as she makes a final appeal to the dumb and silent heavens. In the shadows of quiet churches women sit alone with their grief and wait for absolution from some transgression. Or in the desolation of life they keep sweet some memory and find in the sanctuary the fulfilment of the doctrine of the Communion of Saints.

St. Martin's Church hard by music-hall and brothel and Charing Cross Hospital and the unending rise and fall of the restless traffic by Trafalgar Square where Nelson keeps watch over the Admiralty, and Whitehall leads to the Mother of Parliaments.

Songs of Empire and songs of the sea. Songs of

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distant Colonies founded by the English race. Hymns of holiness and hope.

The exultant cry of the maniac, the wild scream of the murdered, the sobs of the repentant, the low moaning of pain from which there is no surcease, the inaudible prayer of the dying facing those shadows that lie low in the Western horizon . . . the laughter of friendship and the very tender words of love.

Folly. Sin. Shame. Sorrow. Remorse. Regret. . . . And London weaves into a symphony the indomitable hope of humanity, and in listening to the music of London there comes to the human heart an unutterable pity, an illimitable sympathy, a great and understanding affection.

Joys are tempered by the sombre things and the sombre things are lighted up by triumphs. It is a music that fills the heart with beauty, and faith, and love.

But one has to listen and to learn. One must bring to music an understanding heart, for each great master has his own tale to tell, and there are many for whom his tale has no significance. The symphony of London is the story of the race in its upward march towards the new day, and you and I are putting into the symphony some notes of glory or of shame, of inspiration or despair.

Perhaps the most forlorn folk in the world are prisoners, and especially those who are under arrest for the first time. There is no place on earth more foreboding than a police-office and no place so desolate as a police-cell. They smell of tragedy and grief.

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To go there is to shatter most of life's consolations. And the desolation is made more desolate because the dynamic that brought one there has ceased to operate. If only the elation of lust or intoxication or greed endured and the old angle of vision persisted through long days and lonely nights ! But one sees and feels and thinks so differently, and the dicta of Judges and Magistrates sound so unchallengeably commonplace and obvious. Of course this was wrong and that was right, and the stability of good morals and honesty must be preserved or the community could not endure. Of course ! Of course !

Lack of imagination and neglect to visualize and foresee contingencies account for many offences. They are the product of a thoughtless hour or an unthinking daring. Most of us believe that we are fool-proof in relation to the Law, and never was there a misconception more complete. Every man is a potential felon, and most of us already have committed misdemeanours. The only people who are superlatively immune are Treasury Counsel. The thing that causes them surprise is human nature, and warm red blood is a continuing wonder. No junior deacon is so shocked at the naughtiness of the world or so indignant at a lapse from the higher standards of virtue. But most of us refuse to surrender our rights of private judgment. It is a great Protestant doctrine, and we can be generous to a fault towards ourselves. We set our estimate of the moral values against legal obligations and argue moral justice against the mandates of the Criminal Law. What a jury may call

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fraud we call prevision, and what we take by a false pretence we justify by the magnitude of our unrequited services.

And some laws we break unblushingly. Therein lies the danger of the Legislature infringing too far on the natural liberty of the subject. It might be well for the Legislature to adopt a maxim analogous to the Judicial *De minimis lex non curat*.

The law forbids buying cigarettes or chocolates after eight o'clock. I confess I have bought both without a twinge of conscience. One must not buy uncooked meat after the prescribed hour. I confess I could eat a steak bought against the law without compunction. If I failed to find sleep I should lay the blame on the steak and not on my conscience.

I have smoked in non-smoking compartments until rebuked and under menaces I have obeyed the law, and I have driven a motor-car without a licence in my pocket.

How easily, imperceptibly, deliberately or without intent one can pass over the border line that separates free-citizenship from criminal offences. Some offences one openly confesses and the offending is a joke at the law-makers. Other offences happen, too, but alas! they have no quality of humour. Even chance plays a strange part.

A youth appeared at a Police Court on a charge of embezzlement. It was his third time of offending though he had only once before been charged with the offence. He had taken substantial sums of money which he had received on his master's behalf. He

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was remanded for a week and on his reappearance the master made a strong appeal for one more chance and offered the lad, across the Court, his old place at his old wages in order that he might make good.

At the same Court a few days later a woman of middle age stood in the dock on a similar charge. It was her duty to collect moneys and various sums had not been accounted for. The matter was considered by her employers and she was charged. Her antecedent history was good. She had come to the firm with the highest credentials for honesty and ability, but for some reason she had slipped.

For her offending she was standing in the dock. There was no offer of forgiveness, no suggestion of restoration to the old place, no proposal to help.

Chance seems to play a large part in the destiny of the individual, and it is well to keep in mind that neither a conviction nor an excessive penalty is a sure index to the character or soul of the prisoner who goes to jail.

The prisoner is frequently surprised at the happening. It came to pass so imperceptibly, so naturally. He had not considered the nature or quality of his act. Two sailors were charged with being in the unlawful possession of property stolen at the docks. They pleaded guilty. The property consisted of a dozen tumblers of the cheapest quality of glass. They lived nowhere near the docks, they had no friends in the neighbourhood and they did not need them. When asked to explain they could find no explanation. They saw the glasses and they took them.

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And when they were asked why they took them, they could give no answer.

It is interesting and revealing to watch prisoners getting the perspective of things, and to see the interaction of the conflicting interests that make up their lives. Many of the things we take for granted they cannot take for granted. Our certainties are their hypotheses. Where we start from, they aim to get at. Just such very usual things like breakfast or a midday meal or something to eat before bed-time. To-morrow is full of the anxieties of to-day, and the day after may be worse than either. A wet day makes all the difference in the world to some men, to others the only difference is whether the limousine is open or shut. Somehow a decent man with an ailing wife and hungry children does not carry an easier load because of the accredited doctrines of Economic Science aided and abetted by the Criminal Law. There keeps stealing into his mind a strange doctrine of value, that is begotten in hardship and insecurity: In the last analysis there is an ultimate sanctity—is it human life? And I believe he has high authority for saying that the answer is in the affirmative.

The backwash of the social and economic conditions surges about the Courts and they have some relation to the administration of the Criminal Law.

It is impossible to exaggerate the horrors of overcrowding. I have chosen the word with deliberation, for it is a horror by day and a horror by night. It is

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a challenge to decency and the moral law, a challenge to health, efficiency and national well-being.

Marriage can have no beauty and childhood can have no chance. Home life is an utter impossibility. The domestic conditions are the concentrated essence of misery, there could be no normal moral or mental functioning in such an environment.

The first step towards civilization was taken when men decided to bury their dead. It is a great accomplishment to hide away the disgusting things of life. The modern counterpart is found in slums. They are the burial-place of society. The next epoch is to cover graves with flowers and slums with political promises.

The whole conflict of the modern era seems to be whether economic tests are the final tests of national endeavour and whether moral values are only the ornamentations of life. This is a matter that demands recognition from both capitalist and communist.

Moral values will make demands on the proletariat no less extensive than on the peerage, it will involve the proclamation of unpopular doctrines such as the obvious one that a new social order cannot be reared on old frailties, and that drink, lust and lawlessness are destructive of any social order. Human nature will have to discipline itself. There is a segment of society that would change a garden city into slums within a month. The housing issue is so clamant that its solution needs the more careful consideration of the community.

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I doubt if the normal operations of Economic Law will suffice. It may suffice if we consent to pay the price, but the price will be a further debasement of the under-ten thousand. And to accept that is to say that great possessions are the final sanctity. But emotionalism and flamboyant rhetoric will achieve nothing. Humbug does not become honesty by reason of reiteration. Emotionalism distorts the judgment no less than greed. The one is a nervous disorder, the other is a moral disease. Sanguinary expletives may adorn an address, but they add no weight to an argument.

To the solution of the social problem we want sincerity plus sanity. To discard a linen collar does not necessarily involve a balanced mind, and a peak-cap can be the headgear of a fool just as a top hat can be the headgear of a sinner. And even Labour members may wear white spats. The democratic is not the antithesis of the artistic.

Vulgarity does not necessarily mean honesty of purpose. What we need is mutuality and a recognition that we may be mistaken. Human nature is strangely alike. In essence the only difference I see between an East End pub and a West End club is a boiled shirt. I use the shirt, of course, symbolically. A West End club-man would feel more at home in a Ratcliff Highway tavern than a docker at the Carlton Club. We are all sons of Mother Nature, and nature is very real down East. Conventions and artificial things have to be acquired. Hence the need of Eton and Oxford. The politicians have

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much to answer for. They held out high hopes of a world redeemed without effort and without sacrifice. Self-help became one of the cardinal sins. Dirt and idleness were the advertisement of a discredited economic and social system. And advertising is the artistry of lying. Drunkenness is the result of overcrowding, that, of course, is why the clergy, nobility and gentry sometimes appear at Marlborough Street. A new political machine will prevent overcrowding and permit an indulgence in the cravings of the flesh. One wonders if in the near future a law will be put upon the Statute Book to make Cabinet Ministers and Whips punishable for conspiracy to defraud the electorate of their votes and if larceny of a vote by a trick will be added to the latest Larceny Act.

I remember once talking to a prominent party leader. I had indicated that in a certain constituency the *modus operandi* was immoral and dishonest. "I don't care a damn about the morals of the matter. What we want is the seat!"

Perhaps there is an element of truth in the dictum : "Old age, old port and prosperity make cynics of us all!"

There is an intense pressure of overcrowding and economic uncertainty in our industrial areas—and picturesque forecasts of an altered world to follow as a sequel to a change of government will be falsified by events. At the moment it looks as though a score in a parliamentary debate was more satisfying than housing a family.

Attachment to any political party does not make

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the final division of the English people. There is an aristocracy and bourgeois of Labour as well as of Liberal. Some wear evening dress, some no collar. Humanity cannot be labelled like dead pork consigned to the local market towns.

I have met men so keen on achieving economic freedom that they forgot the immediate necessities of their own young children. A lousy child was of no account in the effort towards a great economic emancipation. It took the dock of a Police Court to bring them from economic dreams to parental obligations.

One matter becomes so urgent as to compel to a protest. The ghastly disregard of the sanctity of children. They are spawn thrown upon the river of life. A section of the community by no means negligible beget and multiply with the utter disregard of animals. The man who begets fourteen children and buries ten is lacking in the rudimentary qualities of manhood. And to qualify such behaviour by appeals to sociology is as dishonest as it is untrue.

One understood the recent outburst in the House of Commons in defence of childhood, though wisdom might have toned the quality of its excesses. I would give much to see that passionate defence carried outside the walls of Westminster and uttered in the slums and alley-ways of our overcrowded cities.

Children are not beckoned with love, nor are they welcomed into the dirty slums. They are a burden and a curse.

And the human race has higher purposes than to

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produce "liquid labour" or little baby bodies to hide away in the parish burial-place.

In a Children's Court things are told that make one groan in spirit. The plight of the women is pitiful, the chances of the children are nil, and here and there the father has loads upon his back too great for him to bear.

"Liquid labour and recruits for war"—these seem to be the two justifications for begetting *ad lib.*

What a ghastly justification !

Unlimited families born to dirt, neglect and want, born into the very shadows of death—*Why ?*

Who can justify it and for what end ?

Happily, the most orthodox Catholic and the most heterodox member of the Society for Birth Control can co-operate, in their own way, in the prevention of this terrible problem of neglected children. They have this at least in common, that parenthood is a glorious prerogative, that children are a glorious gift, that the children of to-day are the heirs of the future, and to them will be entrusted the great gifts of life and life's obligations. But there are passages of shadows and blackness in the symphony of London. Life finds just in living a joyousness or something approaching joyousness—a desire to evade extinction or the uncertain issue that lies beyond the shadows. There is much less envy of limousines and pageantry than Lord Birkenhead supposes, for there is meat to eat that he knows not of.

Even the drab drunk has her consolations and her day-dreams. Her wants in food and dress are few,

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and her resting-place is primitive. I have looked at men and women battered by life and lust and envied them their supremacy over circumstances, conventions and laws. Parliament may debate the incidence of taxation or the remission of this or that, but they are uninterested and unperturbed. Not that they escape. Beer, tobacco and tea all carry a heavy burden, and these three sum up the desiderata of life. Nor are their minds sterile and unresponsive to grandeur, for I have seen them look up into the smoke-blue skies of Stepney and speak of their beauty.

They have a philosophy of life that gets close to Calvin and St. Paul, for in their hard vicissitudes and efforts they have found some kink in the theory of Free-will. Ah! they were washed here by some strange tide and they are anchored by circumstances to its shores.

Other men are drunken but they know another fate: other women are unfaithful but they are not wandering harlots by the city-gates. And the children did not choose those alley-ways that are never washed by sunlight to be the dwelling-place of their childhood.

Folk become fatalists on the hard highway of the world, and it may be in that faith they find their consolation, for is it not written:

“Hath not the potter power over the clay
of the same lump to make one vessel unto honour
and another unto dishonour?”

And what strange occurrences make up the anxieties

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and compensations of our world. There was a little old Jew who had been ejected from his squalid room because he was a nuisance. In an area not noteworthy on account of cleanliness he was conspicuous by reason of his dirt, and the Medical Officer of Health had intervened. With the tenacity of his race the old man refused to move, and his belongings were put into the yard. After an interregnum he collected his belongings and found some odds and ends were missing. It was a miscellaneous lot of trifles, screw-nails, odd wheels of broken watches, and such like. He wanted the whole machinery of the Metropolitan Police set in motion to search for his lost treasure. In a world beset with international and domestic problems his quest was the thing of paramount importance. Week by week he came to Court to recount his futile efforts and to find out whether the Court could offer further suggestions. It was a situation full of all the elements of farce, but it was a sorrowful obsession and an unsleeping problem to a little old man who lived in his own world and measured the big world from his own angle.

Where the overcrowding is less dense there is an element of attractiveness in the intimate neighbourliness of human contact. The interests of each become the interests of all, and joys and sorrows are shared together. When the moods, emotions, ideas and experiences of a street are pooled, life has little chance of becoming monotonous. Each day has some new surprise and almost every hour has its new interest. When the intimate friendships cool

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down to dislike and "carried stories" get bandied about, the air becomes electric with the possibilities of war. There is excitement enough for a county. Life is made up of thrills and reactions and expectations. The dwelling-places are so arranged that it is easy to listen-in. If two neighbours are exchanging secrets or compliments they are sure of an audience and the audience are not slow in taking sides. The feud flows over the immediate neighbourhood and friends of both parties come in relays. Personal dignity is easily offended, and an insolent gesture can raise a feud that will live for twenty years.

All this makes life interesting and dramatic. Beside it the days of the middle and professional classes are dull and monotonous. And young people reared in this environment find in leaving it that life has lost its savor. There is about it the fatal fascination of endless excitement. Compared with it, life in a suburban home is colourless and dead. Young girls of artisan areas cannot be expected to settle down readily. Nor is it to be wondered at. Human nature needs the romantic and the poetic, and with her extraordinary power of adaptation she has generously provided for the poor all those elements that make life rich and full of colour and romance.

Birthdays and funerals. Saturday night brawls and Monday washing-days. Courting lads and girls and the mothers of each impelled by a passionate dislike of each. Mothers-in-law and daughters-in-law—all jumbled together, hundreds to the acre.

The dazzling lights of gay public houses, sailors

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ashore and dockers on strike. And women's tongues and screaming children.

All these are woven into London's symphony. It is an expression of the realism of life. And there is more joy than sorrow, more laughter than tears, more hope than despair. London is the shrine of faith.

CHAPTER II

LOST SPLENDOURS

TWO dramatic facts continually face the student of life, and these should teach us to be slow in judgment and quick in sympathy, slow in condemnation and responsive to every appeal. One fact is the surprising and unexpected frailty of the virtuous, and the other is the surprising and unexpected magnificence of the fallen. It will certainly take a god to disentangle the ravelled threads of life and mete out the punishments and rewards that are each man's due.

The clearing-houses of the problems, perplexities and transgressions of the Metropolis are the police courts. There humanity, in all its moods and manners, in all its misdeeds, in its repentant and unrepentant temper, is in continual procession. Day by day and every day through the long years, save only Sundays and Good Friday and Christmas Day, there are told stories that give sidelights on every phase of life.

Men come there from the noisome depths of degradation, and every sin devised by the iniquity of men's hearts is disclosed. Hatred, malice, cruelty, cowardice, lust, frailty are there. The swell trickster

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follows the rogue and vagabond into the dock, and the lady from the suburbs takes the place of the painted lady from the back street. Tales are told of sordid murder and of murder that was done in the sudden paroxysm of an overmastering love. Fraud deliberately conceived and cunningly executed, and fraud whose compelling motive was an invalid wife and hungry children.

All the tragedies of a complex and troubled world move from morning till the gathering gloom of evening, but in between the tragedies there are revealed, too, faith, hope, chivalry, honour, bravery and forgiveness, dramatic in their simplicity and thrilling with those latent splendours that impelled Christ to call men the children of God.

In the poorer areas of London the overcrowding is intense. In houses originally intended for one family there are herded families with flocks of children, and conflicts of interests arise not only between the children but between the parents themselves. Words that were formerly unparliamentary are freely used, and frequently heated words lead to angry blows. The police court summons is the solace for wounded pride or reputation and for bodily injuries. These are freely applied for and less freely issued, but it is not unusual for ten or twelve to appear in the summons list in an afternoon.

After a little experience I discovered a happy formula, and it is one that is invariably applied. The question is asked at the outset of the case: "Do you want your neighbour sent to gaol?"

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Gaol is a word of terrible import, and few of us, save in moments of unbalanced temper, can lightly undertake the responsibility. The complainant is made to feel that the responsibility of sending the defendant to gaol will be his, and that the decision of the Bench will be the fruition of his handiwork. The vision of the gaol is a dramatic appeal to human sympathy, and in few cases have I got an affirmative answer.

Once an aged Hebrew lady in reply to my question very shrewdly told me in broken English that it was for me to decide. I refused the responsibility of sending her kinswoman to gaol and pressed for her decision. During her period of indecision I suggested an adjournment *sine die* until she could make up her mind. The summons has never been restored to the list.

* * * * *

The sudden revelation of the true heart of the complainant is dramatic in its appeal to the defendant. He expected malice ; he finds a positive refusal to assent to punishment. He expected hatred ; he finds a spirit that is of the essence of friendship. I have collated no figures, but I believe that not 20 per cent. of the summonses for assault at the Thames Police Court are fought to a finish, and I would like to believe that at the Thames there is laid the foundation of a happier and more harmonious relationship.

In one of the metropolitan police courts not long ago two neighbours appeared. One stood in front

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of the dock, the other in the witness-box. The complainant had the appearance of very rough handling. After the lapse of a week his eyes and face still showed considerable disfigurements, and he had lost some teeth. The trouble had begun with the women, and the husbands were induced to intervene. The disfigured man was asked if he wanted his neighbour sent to gaol. His reply was a very emphatic negative.

The defendant was startled in astonishment, and he looked across the court at the man whom he had used so badly. It was he who first broke the silence and he broke it with words of self-vilification. He called himself a coward, a term he would not have taken from another. Each man saw the other in a new light, and in that revelation the spirit of true neighbourliness was born and the men went home together.

The dock frequently exhibits a strange and beautiful camaraderie, and men sometimes strive hard to take upon themselves the whole burden of some offence. They will commit perjury to give a co-adventurer the chance of an acquittal. There is, perchance, a distortion of the moral values, but there is a streak of white somewhere in the man who, in the face of the possibility of penal servitude, can sacrifice himself for the salvation of another.

* * * * *

They said there was the stain of human blood upon his hands, and it may well have been, for about

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his face there were gathered lines that were dug by more than Time, and his eyes had a searching restlessness that I had never seen before.

Restlessness was the characteristic thing about him. He could not stand still; his hands could not be at peace; his mind, or perhaps it was his memory, lashed him into a perpetual movement. He wandered from one end of the dock to the other, and in his restlessness he more than once turned his back upon the Bench.

He was not old, though he had travelled far on life's roadway of adventure and sorrow. Lines of weariness went across his face at times, and he hid his tired eyes behind his clenched fists. He was searching for rest. A great hunger kept gnawing at his heart, at his brain. It wanted rest from his tempestuous passions, from his regrets, from his memories, from himself, but he did not know what it was that he was searching for.

His life had been made up of responses to impulses—food, warmth, shelter, purchasing power, friendship, women. His impulses directed his steps to the places and things that gave him satisfaction and delight. He was an exhibition of natural law in the modern world, an expression of the survival of the fittest. He evaded the monotony of work, the responsibilities of respectability, the anxieties of domesticity.

Adventure could be found coupled with the things for which men toil incessantly. Life could give the fruition of labour without its grave and grievous limitations. And there is some appealing charm in

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the challenge to civilization and its penal laws, as there is romance in pitting one's wits against the wisdom of the police.

Instinct against science. Individuality against organization. There is something almost of the true spirit of sport in society's contest with its criminals. The prisoner knows when he is beaten; seldom, indeed, does he complain. And the talk between the prisoner and the police is often like the talk of the rival captains after the game is over.

But each man has a larger life than his work or his sport, and there are the evolutions and reactions that weave out the texture of our destiny. The sportsman may have a heavy heart, and the gay captain a tragic setting to his life. And behind the smiling impudence of the prisoner there may be problems beating on the brain, and a fate in course of fulfilment of which he is fully aware.

The torture of misdeeds, the anguish of memory, the puzzling bewilderment of life and its perplexities, the sense of having missed, and missed irrevocably, the things that give honour and contentment stab the soul, and the criminal becomes at times a man of sorrows and the dock becomes for him Golgotha.

There is purification in sorrow, and emancipation in suffering.

Once I travelled from Bournemouth to Portland. I stood in the corridor of a long train, and I was watching the glorious landscapes of Dorset. Looking into an adjoining compartment I saw two warders and a convict on their way to Portland Prison. The

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convict was a man of middle-age, and never have I seen a human face with such composure and triumph of achievement.

It was the face and the triumph that come only out of a resurrection. The crucifixion, the tomb and mortality were passed by. He lived in the light of some fulfilment. And the man with the arrows on his coat has become for me a symbol, and I would have given much to learn the story of that life, of the tragedy of its shame and the glory of its resurrection.

But it is not difficult to visualize the stages of its emancipation. How familiar they are to every newspaper reader. The arrest, the trial, the verdict, the sentence, the horrible, unutterable initiation into prison life . . . and the endless torture of remorse. . . .

And the man with blood upon his hands had escaped the penalty of death, but he could not walk in the ways of other men. The social nexus was destroyed. Society held no place for him; the ostracism was spoken by his own heart, and he refused to recognize any laws of men.

I saw him more than once, and the last time he went to penal servitude. Each time he was eaten with a strange anxiety. As the tale of crime was told he strove hard to set the facts to his own purpose and to lay the heavier facts against himself. He strove to aggravate his part in the commission of the offence. His solicitude for his companions was magnificent; his self-sacrifice was wonderful to behold.

In courage, honour, magnanimity and self-forget-

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fulness he stood a dramatic contrast to leaders I have known in religious and social adventures. The tests and valuations of life were all his own. Conventions he ignored, and laws he despised, but he obeyed the law of the superlative sacrifice, and his philosophy had about it something of the splendour of the Gospel.

Lost soul. Lost sheep. Lost piece of silver. Here in the grey dock of a London criminal court the old parable of Galilee took on a strange significance, and out of his sufferings a lost man exemplified by some wonderful law—the chivalry of God.

It is a revelation into the depths of life to discover the very simple things on which tragedies can hang. There are things that most of us take for granted, and yet the loss of them plunge men and women into recklessness and despair. A woman with a long list of convictions for felonies was making a hard fight to keep her place in the world. Three years had gone by since the last conviction, and her husband and she were living in amity and friendship. The clouds of shame seemed to have gathered in the west, and the woman was keeping her eyes fixed on the east where the sunshine is. Her little daughter of ten took ill and the mother waited by her through days and nights with a strange anxiety. The child died. Under the influence of drink, whose consolation she had sought, she relapsed and was charged with stealing a packet of soap of the value of fourpence. The three years' fight and victory was thrown away, and she committed her old offence. Grief had impelled her to her old

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wrong-doing. During the week's remand she took the probation officer into her confidence and confessed that all her interest in life had gone into the coffin with her child.

The week at Holloway roused all her old repentances and resolves. And in the self-analysis that suffering brings she diagnosed her own disease. If only she could get a foster-child she thought she could begin her fight again. It was in association with the world of childhood that she found her inspiration and consolation. And a little child is leading her back from the paths of crime.

Few people, I imagine, appreciate how much the adults in squalid parts are dependent on the children for the colour, romance and adventure of life. In some degree this explains the sacrifice that they make to have a family out of all proportion to their means. Children are an unending interest and they may become a profitable investment. They are an outlet for the unrestrained emotions of the poor, and their very dependency makes a strong appeal.

Somewhere down in East London there is a disabled soldier who contracted consumption during his military service. He is unmarried, and just before the war he conceived the singular notion of getting a baby. Most men of his class, if they keep anything, keep rabbits or dogs or linnets, but this workman of the dock-side wanted a little child. After some reflection he decided to take the step, and one can get babies easily down in East London. One day he brought home a little fellow of a few weeks old. The baby

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became the light of the home and the joy of the neighbourhood. Everybody was interested in Jimmy's baby. During the war the baby was the binding link between the private in the trenches and England. The baby stood for England—her history, traditions, policy. The baby was England.

And so it is that in the fevered, harassed life of the Underworld, with its perplexities of misdeeds, slackness of work, daily bread and housing, there are displayed in a hundred ways those splendours that make the human heart glad and are an earnest of the upward march of the race.

CHAPTER III

THE WEST END BY DAY AND BY NIGHT

THE only unchanging things about the West End are its streets and squares. Regent Street, Oxford Street, Leicester Square and Piccadilly abide ; the buildings change and the teeming, sweeping life varies from hour to hour. St. James's Hall, a place of amusement and a house of prayer, becomes a restaurant ; small shops change into vast emporiums ; and from large firms evolve colossal trusts.

But Regent Street and Piccadilly are like priests after the order of Melchizedek.

The shop windows have as many moods as an April day, and their expressions are as variable as the countenances of girls. The Regent Street of to-day is not the Regent Street of yesterday, and to-morrow it will be different again.

All the ideas, thoughts, memories, dreams and desires that stir emotions and impel to activity parade themselves from window to window. The moods of Regent Street are the moods of humanity.

The simplicities of the schoolgirl look at you not far from Piccadilly Circus, and thoughts begin to gather about the school at Exmouth, or Shrewsbury,

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or St. Andrews ; girlish forms and faces, and the light of nature in their bright eyes and the soft charm in the colour of their cheeks. These are the sacred mothers of to-morrow, and their hands shall tend the Englishmen to be—the heirs of our immortal inheritance.

The nursery is there too. Little cots in white, with pink ribbons holding the white coverlets. And the heart is stirred with all the blessedness that is associated with motherhood and childhood and home. In the melody of the heart, with its memories of happy days, the tumult of buses and taxis and motor-cars is unheard. In Regent Street the world is, for a moment, by the cot of babyhood, and the sacredness of Bethlehem touches to quietness the restless fever of the street that knows other moods and quests and passions.

And there are travelling-bags and trunks and rugs. We see wide seas through which we go to the mountains of Simla, and the wide, sweeping pastures of Australasia. The old soldier recalls his subaltern days, and the sedate governor-general sees the wayward youth that sought far-off fields of adventure. The romances of life are lived afresh and men forget for an instant that the years have leaped by, and Time has written his impressions on whitened hair and yellow skin and on the figure that has lost a little of its straightness. There is a twinkle in an old man's eyes as he turns away from the window. What is the memory that has lit the face with the light of an old happiness ?

Regent Street is more than an emporium of hats

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and furs and frocks. It is an emporium of recollections. It is the world's market-place of joy, and men and women from every hamlet and city find in it memories that make glad the heart. The blows of Adversity seem to be softened, and even sorrow is tinged with hope.

Crêpe and the habiliments of death are in that window. Everything in it is suggestive of graves and separations and mourning, but close by other windows are ablaze with the spring flowers—narcissus, daffodil and tulip. And is it not written that around the Sepulchre was a garden ?

There are no bookshops in Regent Street. There is need of none. The nearest is in Piccadilly, close by the clubs where men seclude themselves from the throb of reality and life. In Regent Street each man is his own poet, and each woman weaves her own romances as she walks its crowded pavements ; and merry bands of children pass along. There is daddy and mummy, and their hostages to fortune. Each is oblivious of the passers-by. The joyousness of the big world is about them. Daddy in the world is even a bigger personage than daddy at home, and mummy—who could have believed that she knew her way in the maze of streets and crush of traffic ?

There seems less squalor about the street merchants, and the blind men and match-sellers belong to the peerage of the poor.

To be sure, there are workers in this kaleidoscopic world of Regent Street, but work is only a synonym for joy. They are actors in this great gay pageantry

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of life. There is bigness and gladness and comfort everywhere.

The West End at noon is an expression of clean, decent, staid England. There is the indelible and unmistakable imprint of Puritan ideals about it. There is none of the superficial emotionalism of Continental cities, or the brusque unmannerliness of cities that lie farther west in the world. There is culture, reserve, dignity and good manners. This is the visible expression of the soul of England, whose qualities have gone deep into the secret places of the earth.

By the afternoon the West End has changed. There has been no cessation of traffic. The pavements are still crowded, and the buses still hasten on their way. Limousines and carriages with footmen pass by, but there is a touch of something in the equipages and in the demeanour of their occupants that marks them off from the morning. Is it flair? Is it self-consciousness?

And the men are more numerous. They seem to be men of leisure, of easy circumstances in time and money. The suburbs, too, have poured out their tens of thousands of young matrons in search of a second romance or of some new charms in dress and adornment. The provincials from villages, towns and cities crowd to matinées and concerts, and the young ladies who have finished their education, and the young men who have begun their professional studies at university or medical school, are weaving webs as light as gossamer and as glorious.

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It is the bourgeoisie at its best, taking its joys not sadly, but wisely, and adding the colour of its virtues to the panorama of life.

But there are others who live in a haunted world. By some word or deed they have put themselves in pawn and they are not their own. They have been bought with a price. They dread to-morrow and they are sitting always on the doorstep of the future. Or some woman with a romantic heart still nourishes dreams of love and lovers. She, too, finds every interest in life in the things that are to be. The West End ministers to every human need and offers divine succour. The secrets are wrested from the Sphinx, and the hidden things of other lives are plumbed and openly disclosed. The texture of the brain is surveyed and its developments and tendencies are accurately forecasted. The failures of our lives are diagnosed and our feet are set upon the way of life. Spey-wives, crystal-gazers and phrenologists bring their ministry to the distraught and offer for reward consolation to all who dread to-morrow and God and Hell.

There are minor scavengers and scavengeresses to beautify our fingers and our toes, and prayer-vendors who will procure for us the beauty of holiness. Medicated baths wash away all the stains of our follies, and the proprietors, for reward, will wash us whiter than the snow, though our sins be red like crimson. The Victorian evangelists are succeeded by the Georgian bath-houses. Every emotion is exploited, every fear is nurtured and turned into money. And every-

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thing even in the region of the psychic and the spiritual can be bought like cigarettes and perfume in Bond Street, or gaudy gallowses and garters in the Burlington Arcade.

There is nothing in the way of the artistic, the sensual or the spiritual that you cannot buy down West. It is the sanatorium of the blasé, the sanctuary of those who are half-sick with the world, the flesh and the devil; and the chemists' shops supply bromide on draught, and this succeeds where perhaps the prayer-vendors have failed.

It is a curious phenomenon this longing for absolution; this need for some confessional. It is one expression of the domination of fear in men's hearts. They dare not be alone. They dare not think alone. They dare not come face to face with God alone. Even the Mediator is too distant, too divine. A priest is too detached from the affairs of a wicked world. So, often the words of absolution are spoken to the repentant and the fearful from the lips of the black-mailer and the felon.

There is no God down West! There are men and women amongst the passers-by who are fleeing from Him. But the words of an old poet become alive after these many days:

“Whither shall I go from
Thy spirit? or whither shall I
Flee from thy presence?
If I ascend up to heaven thou art there:
If I make my bed in hell, Lo! thou art there.
If I say surely the darkness shall cover me:
Even the night shall be light about me.”

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And about all the weary quest of men and women there is a great pathos. It may be that in disappointment and despair they find some way of life.

Tea-time ends the second phase of West End life. There is a great trek homewards. Victoria and Charing Cross, Waterloo and London Bridge are thronged with the womenfolk of London's suburbs. The treasures of bargain sales and unresisted temptations are carefully tended, and twilight will see the delights and disappointments of the day's work.

But here and there a woman finds tragedy. In the shops some article of adornment made a sudden appeal. Without thought or with deliberation she lifts it, and with a beating heart she makes for the streets. A thousand emotions thrill through her body. Her brain is awlirl. A hand is laid upon her shoulder and she is taken to the office. It is anguish, shame, unutterable despair. She beats at the bars of circumstance. She cries for some escape. There is none. And Marlborough Street sees another spectacle of the grief that a thoughtless thing can give. And the reputation that in the morning was spotless is torn and stained before the day is ended.

The shops grow empty and the blinds are drawn. Shop-girls and manikins make for home, or hostels, or the places of assignation where romance comes with its golden threads after the drab of the day's work. It is the interregnum of the West End when the stage is set for the night-life of London.

Everything has changed except geography. Regent Street, Oxford Street and Piccadilly abide, but the

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atmosphere, the temper, the ideals and desires have altered. Everything minister to Eros. Everyone is in search of delights. The restaurants are palaces of light and mauve and gold, and waiters in white linen are the priests that lead the faithful to the high altars of joy. Wine is yellow and red and sparkling, and the silver flashes back the twinkling of the thousand lamps. Flowers crowd tier on tier about the balconies, and women in gorgeous apparel put out from life all suggestions of mortality and shadows.

There is no death, and shadows are but the staging for the true artistry of life.

Stringed instruments give a joyousness to the sobs that someone acquainted with grief wrote into music, and in such environment even grief takes on the flavour of a new delight. White women dance to the syncopated music of black men, and in the transmuted emotions of the savage they find the avenue to a new sensualism. Civilization changes names in order to make intolerable things permissible, for the demi-monde can readily become *à la mode*.

Life surges and seethes about Piccadilly Circus. It is the embodiment of desire. Every face reveals a seeker after delights. The walls are ablaze with coloured fires proclaiming to the wide world some satisfaction. From port wine to baby's food, from evening newspapers to bicycles, benefactors offer surcease from cares and ennui. The lights blaze from the bars, and the painted faces of women leer at the passers-by. Every fancy of men's hearts is offered its complete satisfaction.

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Little reflection is needed to visualize the raging, tearing restlessness that beats the human soul. West London is awlirl. Impulse. Greed. Appetites natural and unnatural. The human race is demonstrating to the pale moon that the roots of its life are linked with the beasts.

So it seems, but how deceitful appearances can be! There is a woman passing by and she is one of the joyous throng. She is in glorious apparel and there is the light of laughter on her lips. So it seems. But her life is steeped in a supreme agony. This joyous night is only an interlude in days and nights of pain. Cancer is eating out her breasts. She came to town to see the specialist and this morning he sentenced her to death. There is another; she is the Matron in a London Hospital. Her face seems to shine with irrepressible gaiety. She carries with her the laughter of the Comedy which she has been watching. More than thirty years ago in filial obedience she surrendered love or seemed to surrender it. And she has given her love to the afflicted and the suffering. But she carries a scar upon her heart.

Life surges and seethes about Piccadilly. Pain and laughter, holiness and sin: sacrifice and selfishness. A mixture of all the elements of humanity. The human race is demonstrating to the pale moon that the roots of its life are linked with the divine.

Even the gayest may be responsive to something more than self. The Six-hundred Guinea Band is playing a Rag-time in an exclusive Night Club hard by Piccadilly. Two score couples dance the

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latest Fox-trot, and all is alive with gaiety and carelessness. And the tables are filled with gleaming glasses red and yellow with wine. This surely is the tabernacle of Satan ; and the Flesh is his high priest. Men and women and wine, and the blue haze of aromatic cigars.

During an interval in the dancing an appeal is made for some charity. Just a word or two is spoken that there is need for some orphans or the sick or the hungry. A magnum of champagne is put up for auction. The price mounts up, and we watch the face of a girl as she urges the man beside her to keep the bidding going. At last the limit is reached and one hundred guineas has been paid for a bottle of wine. The man beside me whispered "*La jeunesse dorée !* What extravagance ! What wicked waste ! " The bottle was put up again and it brought a further twenty guineas.

And in the heated atmosphere of the Night Club there came into my memory an incident that I read of in the far-off years.

" There came a woman having an alabaster box of ointment, of spikenard very precious, and she brake the box and poured it on His head. And there was some that had indignation within themselves and said, Why was this waste of the ointment made ? "

Out of the welter of a mad world, in an environment reputed to be ablaze with lust and sin there is manifested a magnificence of sacrifice unexpected and unexcelled in the avenue of the reputable and the virtuous.

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One watches the countenances of the people. There is a high standard of good breeding, politeness and restraint. No vulgar word, no questionable gesture. Each group is self-sufficing and each party has its own gaiety.

Women of breeding and beauty with soft lines about their faces and tender looks within their eyes. What possibilities of domestic bliss and happy homes, and healthy, laughing children !

In pursuing false ideals of where life's fulfilment lies they are missing most of the things that matter.

Tired looks stole into their faces as the night wore on, and whatever they were seeking for they had not found. Perhaps one day they will learn that the dancing man of a London Night Club has not got the qualities that endure the stress of life.

We passed out into the cool morning air. What a paradoxical world ! As we went through Piccadilly a tired harlot, emboldened by despair, asked for the price of a cab-fare to her rooms in Bloomsbury. The new day had dawned and there was no food for breakfast because she had missed her market. But perhaps in a long sleep she might forget her hunger.

CHAPTER IV

THE EAST END BY DAY AND BY NIGHT

EAST London is a world by itself; it has its own people, its own traditions and ideals. It is a composite and complex place, with complex and conflicting elements, and with languages and metaphors as varied as are its races. Withal, it is a distinctive and definitive entity. The most conspicuous quality of East London is its formulated cosmopolitanism. Everything that is connoted or suggested by provincialism is lacking. No colour of man, no style of dress or demeanour, no strangeness of tongue, no oddity of food or drink or faith occasions surprise. The shop windows are a study in the dietetics of the world, as are the synagogues, churches and chapels of its confused and conflicting faiths.

Surging about Aldgate, the gateway to East London, we meet the children of Shem, Ham and Japhet, and a jostling mass of motors and horses, and shouting, cursing men with handcarts. Here are the cross-currents of Europe and Asia, Africa and America—the impact of the ideas, traditions, religions, passions, sins, and desires of a mixed and troubled world.

Now and then a face or an occurrence in the crush

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of the traffic touches a strange fancy, and sets one dreaming of far-off friends and places. A piano, encased in rough wood, is branded for Bombay or Melbourne or Durban, and labelled for a distant place in India or Australia or South Africa. Some English folk, with memories in their hearts of Dorset lanes or the red cliffs of Devon, are waiting for this instrument that will stir emotions, and weave faces and fancies in the gathering twilight—heaped mounds in quiet graveyards, green meadows through which there ran the little stream, and stiles by which they lingered long ago.

Those vans laden with baggage are hastening to the docks, and the taxi-cabs are hurrying with the men who watch for England in the far-off outposts.

Charabancs hold up the traffic, and queer men from strange lands catch at Aldgate their first glimpse of throbbing London and the metropolitan people. Trams and buses in an endless procession hurry East to Forest Gate and Barkingside, or West to Maida Vale. In the gutterway stand barrows laden with every requisite for human needs. Books, from commentaries on St. Paul's Epistles to lurid novels with blazing covers, boot-protectors and razors, cough lozenges and jellied eels, music portfolios and bananas, and screw-nails and oranges. The barrows are splashed with the mud of many winters, and in the summer days the sunshine gives a glory even to the garnished slush about the wheels. Here is a pulsing, throbbing terminal of life. It is a shore washed by the Seven

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Seas. And I have never seen the same face twice in all my long recollection of it.

East London has little sense of corporate consciousness, because it has the sense and quality of universality. It is almost the world's home. There is a beaten track from its grey, sombre streets to Ghettoes in Poland, to mud-cabins in Nigeria, and to the rice-fields of China. The civic pride that is characteristic of lesser cities and obscure boroughs is unknown. East London's life is too mighty, too inscrutable, too inarticulate, to find expression in gilded pomp and pageantry. And in the pressure of its problems and perplexities it gives no concern to the childish rivalries that impel, at times, to municipal magnificence. Her streets and squares have been spared those stone and brass impertinences that tell the generations of the virtues of some civic fathers—a tribute to the dead by the living who set them up in sure and certain expectation of a similar immortality for themselves.

Wandering Eastwards, we strike the remnant of an historic race. A very little distance separates the Royal Exchange and the Bank of England from a civilization long anterior to theirs, yet no less real and virile. It is a civilization of forty centuries ago. Jewry, with its traditions and institutions and promises in dirt and squalor, and in the splendour of its dreams. Here they still abide in the wilderness amongst Hittites and Canaanites. Here we see old patriarchs in whose eyes burn visibly the fires of an unquenchable faith. They are awaiting the fulfilment of the promises. Hard by dwell the Canaanites, men burnt

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black by Eastern suns—the heathen of our childhood, of whom we sang in village Sunday-schools ever so long ago, and the lithe figures of the Jap and the Chink.

Pressing East, we come to the London of ships and the sea, a revelation of the romance and magnificence of commerce and seamanship. All the wealth of the world is brought to the Port of London, and by her waterways there forgather men of every race and tongue and people. Here is a microcosm of the human family that is scattered across the face of the wide world, each with the seething fires of his breed slumbering in his blood, responding to the impulses and needs of his race, wandering through long days and in strange places in quest of some fulfilment, vague, intangible, inarticulate as yet.

And, beating about this polyglot people, from Aldgate to the threshold of the sea, are the mighty complexities of natural and economic laws challenging virtue, and primordial impulses violating the prohibitions of the Criminal Law.

The conflict of the world's soul is visible by day and by night. Mighty ships and mighty men, the gathered harvests of far-off lands, the handiwork of British skill in a thousand factories, the smoke curling skywards like sweet incense from hundreds of humble homes, men and women and children, healthy and diseased, virtuous and foul, industrious and debauched. One's heart swells at the mightiness and mystery of life. The problems of Orient and Occident cross and clash—problems of race and inter-

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race, of foreign missions and home affairs. Confucius whispers to his sons in Limehouse, and in the haze of opium smoke, or in the arms of white girls in Pennyfields, the faithful forget the decrees and obligations of faith.

Mohammed and Buddha whisper, too, to their wayward children, and Christ's Cross looms above the fever and the fretfulness at St. Paul's.

The old problems persist—sin, tragedy, hunger and want. And humanity marches onward in unending procession to the fulfilment of some purpose of which we know nothing, and whose day is still very far off.

At nightfall, East London loses something of its drabness. The high moon flings golden light that touches its narrow streets and alleyways with mystery and wistfulness. These are the abodes of weary men and broken men, of weary women and fallen women and the children move like fairies down the shadowy streets.

One waits again by Aldgate. In the gathering twilight, great crowds wait in queues for trams and buses. The lamps hiss and blaze on the barrows in the gutterways, and the gutter merchants shout in raucous voices the attraction of their wares.

The lost men of London move in and out the waiting crowds. The day is wearing on, and their pockets are empty. A wet night at Aldgate impels a homeless man to a great audacity, and an empty stomach moralizes in large generalities. There a philosophy that conflicts with criminal jurisprudence, and yet it may have some elements of truth.

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In and out the pushing crowd a lost man moves. At one time it is a tram for Poplar, at another it is a bus for Maida Vale or Barkingside.

A detective watches him from the shadows of the barrows, for rogues and vagabonds are known. It is an obvious and ominous deduction that even a rogue and vagabond cannot be desirous of going East and West at the same time, and an indiscriminate selection of a public vehicle gives rise to grave suspicions.

One operation is successful. "Ah! Here's the purse!"

'And his heart thrills with a momentary satisfaction. This means warmth and food and bed.

"Ugh!" A hand is laid upon his arm, and a detective leads him away to Leman Street. In the morning he will go to Arbour Square.

Sailors move Westward from the docks, for Aldgate is the Piccadilly Circus of London East. This is the parade for youth and beauty, love and laughter.

Girls of gaiety and men from the sea form friendships, and friendships are sometimes an avenue for avarice. Flaring bars, with wine and beer, cement the casual friendship of an hour, and sailors are stricken with a sudden giddiness and forgetfulness. They reel out into the street, and the police find them, adrift in the gutterways of Cable Street.

But all is not drink and lust and sordidness. Yonder is Rachel as real and romantic as when she lingered by the well, and won the love of Isaac. And yonder is Jacob, as real as when he fled from

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Laban at Padanaram. In mean streets, under the yellow glare of the lamplight, there are woven anew the splendid dreams of life, and youth casts a glorious glamour on the grey-black skies of Stepney.

Farther East, the river gleams and glistens, twinkling back the light of stars and lamps. We listen to the sough of its waters as they beat about the sides of the waiting ships. And often, too, there passes on its tides strange burdens, moving outwards to the great sea—at times it is the body of a man; at times it is the body of a woman, unknown, unnamed, unsought. Some human heart that failed in the conflict of the world, and went out on the tide of the Thames in search of peace.

And close by the shops in Pennyfields—Asia in London—the abode of the yellow men. All is mysterious, hidden, foreboding. No one has yet dared to plumb the depths of its silence and mystery and crime.

East London has been baptized with the memory of the butcheries of Jack the Ripper and the flamboyant appeals of the righteous to flood with the Gospel the metropolitan underworld, until it has as its exclusive associations drab harlots and unemployable wasters. Those associations have been linked on to lurid tales of Chinatown and the audacious civic adventures of Poplar.

Dirt, recklessness, indolence, lawlessness, and a seething, weltering mass of humanity at its lowest and foulest.

The West End can have its episodes of lust and

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murder, but Long Acre still holds its happy associations of shining carriages and motor-cars, and Fulham is associated with the Bishop's Palace instead of Ronald True.

Homicidal maniacs are an interlude in West London, but in East London they become an enduring association.

Nor is East London altogether woven out of Polish Jews, Arabs and yellow men.

From Arbour Square stretching north to Hackney and south to Ratcliffe Highway and east far beyond Limehouse to Stratford and East Ham there is a solid block of English people as English in their tastes and habits, in their patience and loyalty, in their domestic relations and civil responsibilities as is York or Bristol or Berwick-on-Tweed. And there is an attachment to the soil as definite and passionate as in parts of rural England. East London England offers no apologies for its history, traditions or aspirations, for it is London by the Thames and its local history is as rich as Norham or Alnwick or Westminster.

There are thrills of beauty for those who watch the sunlight on the broad river as it washes by Shadwell Park. The tunnels are fairy palaces of lights and shadows, and the sounds travel like rumbling thunder. The masts of the great ships stand guard by the waterways and the docks are pulsing with life through all the long hours of day and night.

It is a place of intimacy and freedom. There are few castes in English East London. Neighbour-

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liness, with its occasional limitations, prevails, and there is frankness in personal opinions and their expressions. Billingsgate is a famous form of speech, but it may lose its picturesqueness now that it is becoming Parliamentary. Primordial things matter most and there is little room for the artificial.

East London is *par excellence* a place of problems and perplexities—social and domestic. This is the place to test faith and try virtue. More experiments in social and religious revivals have been tried here than anywhere in the world, and they are still being tried. East London never knows despair though it is familiar with hunger and hardship and homelessness.

In Surrey lanes and Scottish uplands it is difficult to believe that Life has set such hard tasks and problems to its children. When away from them it is easy to forget; when never in contact at all it is impossible to visualize and understand.

Life is a queer business and the world is a queer place. Philosophy and theology have tried to define them and justify them, but they are full of a strange injustice. Some of our children come to us amongst flowers and green grass and open spaces. Other children come to overcrowded slums with rats running across the counterpanes. There are no flowers or green grass or open spaces, and Time has written his name upon all the houses old and worn and squalid. It is a classic in squalor.

Bethlehem became historic by reason of an environment less dramatic, but perhaps it is Time

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and Genius that adds romance to an occurrence. The world pities Jesus because he is the Son of God, and was born in a manger nineteen hundred years ago. We accept the incarnation, but the parable of the lost sheep puts a strain on our credulity. We are strong in our acceptance of heredity and environment, and, strangely enough, we expect an Aryan race in spite of their operation.

We become aware of physical defects only when we want young men for the war machine.

East London lives in the unceasing conflict of faith and political theories and the crude denials of both. The brotherhood of man is countered by communism, and communism by the facts of experience. And the compelling needs of each day leave little time to pursue abstract studies. Work is uncertain. It is true that a section is content with the parish and the dole, but it is only a section.

There is a sturdy independence amongst the harassed poor. Many prefer work to parish relief, and they make strange sacrifices to earn what they eat. Here is a type of workman by no means uncommon down East :

" 10th July, 1923.

" SIR,—I read your remarks about Exchanges and Guardians. Never were truer. I walked from London to Southampton and got work, but the nearest lodgings I could get are at Winchester. I am married with two children. I pay 1s. 2½d. per day railway fare. Often I walk and get 4 hours' work. I am

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stopped 1s. 2d. out of that to keep a lot of lazy swine. I could do with it many a time to buy bread. Very often I am desperate but I don't sign on. Good luck to you and damn the Labour Exchange.

“ Yours,

“ A DOCKER.”

I have witnessed at Exchanges, too, men pleading for work as though they were asking a supreme favour. It is a terrible revelation of modern social conditions.

Nothing could be more cruel and unjust than to assume that the great army of casual workers in East London are dodgers and drunkards. Their patience and capacity to endure are a miracle of wonder. And social parasitism is not a disorder that is limited in its operations to East of Aldgate. Pressure of this kind forces some people to attempt a new way of social salvation, but it breaks the hearts of others.

An intimate acquaintanceship with the actualities would lead to an appreciation of some of the social movements that have become prominent in East London. And perhaps this outlet is not the worst. Faith in the impossible brings a touch of blessedness, and it is better than despair. If East London is an expression of economic sanity, then we are living in a mad world.

CHAPTER V

THE CITY BY DAY AND BY NIGHT

THE City is a strange complexity. In it the ancient and modern are blended and balanced till it becomes unique in its artistry. The square mile of the City of London has more of the symbolism and realism of England than any other part of her broad shires. It is a mosaic of all that England has been. Roman, Plantagenet, Tudor, Stuart and Hanoverian in literature, governance and ideals. Most places of renown have been washed by the tide of life for an epoch, they have stood prominently in some endeavour or for some adventure, and then they are grown over with moss and lichen, or they are mere backwaters of the river of life. But London is the Melchizedek of cities. It is the Ancient of Days that has discovered the formula of perpetual Youth. It draws the antiquarian, for it holds the charm and the treasures of old days and old ways. It is a mausoleum of memories. But it draws, too, the students of modern affairs. There is no break in its history or its traditions, and there seems no limit to its adaptability and development.

London is the expression of the English temper

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—respect for tradition, response to the requirements of the present, recognition of the many-sidedness of the human race. It ministers to sentiment in a thousand associations, and by day the streets are crowded with hurrying men who labour untiringly for daily bread.

Warehouses, shops, offices, banks, storey upon storey till the tall chimneys reach up to the blue haze that covers her like a garment. The traffic is unending. The rush of wheels, the throb of engines, the patter of horses' feet upon the tarred roadway all weave out a melody that every Londoner has learnt to love. The flowing tide washes East and West, North and South. Currents and cross-currents of vehicles with cargoes of humanity and merchandise and treasure, and by day there is no ebb-tide.

The City is the Eldorado. Within its radius there are riches untold, and the rush and hurry and fever and fretfulness are in pursuit of them.

Men strive for wealth, some lawfully, some unlawfully. And in possessing wealth they lose the adventurous spirit that is the salt of life. In artificial ways they seek and find new outlets, and those outlets are at times an avenue to Penal Servitude. Bevan was tired of the boredom of satiety, and every man of ease is in parlous danger of shipwreck if his blood is red. Life was intended for adventure.

St. George's Hill and Totteridge are a proclamation to the world that the fever of the city is not allayed by bracken and gorse and open spaces. It is a fever of the soul.

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But there are tens of thousands for whom the city is a mint in which they find the money to give food and laughter and joy to those who wait behind in the little villa at Golder's Green or Streatham. And sometimes the money is minted out of blood and manhood.

Riding through Leadenhall Street, eastwards, I once saw the minting of the money that the City sometimes gives. There was a block in the traffic, and I watched the passers-by and the clerks in the offices beginning the day's work. Through one window I witnessed manhood paying the price that a bully can demand.

An old man, oozing with prosperity, was talking to a younger man approaching middle life. The face and demeanour of each told a plain tale.

The older man was crimson with rage, and shook a menacing finger at the other. Again and again the younger man strove to explain ; but a finger only pointed to the door. The older man left the room, the younger one waited by the desk looking, with eyes that saw not, out into the busy street. The bus moved onwards, and I think I knew the story. The clenched fist, the bitten lip, the tense hold of the body were indication of the crucifixion of manhood.

If only he dared to let himself go ! But some restraint held him. Some duty, some claim, some recollection of great obligations steeled him to accept the insults of the man who hired him and paid him.

Was it the recollection of an old and worn woman

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whom he was shielding from adversity? Was it the laughter of the children who waved him "good-bye" at the little gate of the little house and who were waiting to welcome him home? Dare he go back as a messenger of ill-tidings and cloud those eyes with shadows? Each day as I pass along Leadenhall Street I look through that office window, but I have never seen again the actors in the little scene. And I wonder whether the pointing to the door began a tragedy of hardship and hunger, or whether the price that manhood paid was the grand atonement for some mistake and a sufficient satisfaction to a petulant old man with great possessions and a torpid liver.

The City can corrode the soul, it can kill love, it can tear and destroy all the romantic texture of life. Was it not written of old: "Where your treasure is there will your heart be also"? Thousands are engaged in increasing their purchasing power and simultaneously they are destroying the capacity to enjoy. They think in terms of money, they talk in metaphors of money. Money is their touchstone of success. They choke every generous emotion with the maxim that "business is business and philanthropy is in the haberdashery department." One of the very few things about which I care to be dogmatic is that money is not a condition precedent to happiness and well-being, nor is its possession a beneficence. The inner history of the New Rich even to the second generation is frequently dramatic. And the surest and easiest way to destroy your

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progeny is to leave them wealthy but without breeding, and purchasing-power with only the lusts of the flesh to satisfy.

The fruition of good fortune is sometimes seen in syphilitic sons. And men awaken to the tragedy too late. During the war I was *tête-à-tête* with an old friend of mine. We had not met for years, and men who were boys together get back to old confidences and intimate confessions. He said: "It is extraordinary how time goes and how little we know of it. I have just wakened up to the fact that my children have grown up. They are now young men and young women and they have sprung up without my knowing it. They are almost strangers to me. You see, I was so busy with my own affairs and the City is a jealous mistress."

He was arranging to leave the City in order to retrieve what he could of life and there was something very poignant about his confession. "Yes! I have made money, but you see what I have lost. I would like to buy it all back, but I fear it is something that money cannot buy."

In moments of wit and wine we laugh uproariously at the ancient dictum, "Love of money is the root of all evil," and we express our readiness to accept our share of the "root," but it can become the most cruel lust of life without the glamour and the romance that attach to other frailties that the Scriptures call sin. It wizens up mercy, and it kills pity. Romance cannot live within its choking atmosphere.

A husband and wife lived a reputable and god-

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fearing life. They were models of provincial respectability and very obedient to all the social conventions.

The man was mean and he ultimately graduated in greed. Money was his standard in morals, manners, culture and civics: it was his test for friendship. Ultimately, after twenty-five years of marital life, the woman sickened unto death. The children urged consultations with specialists to save if possible the life of a mother whom they worshipped. The husband delayed and justified his delay for many days on the grounds that if the case was hopeless, as it seemed, to call in specialists was merely wasting money.

And the most terrible thing about the money lust is that it is shameless in its shame. There is neither honour, dignity, nor self-respect. An eminently successful man gave a dinner-party last Christmas and he invited, amongst others, some of those whom he was anxious to impress. There were many dishes and many wines. The host was restrained and cautious till the night wore on, when wine and familiarity led him to the cataclysm. With boisterous hilarity he relapsed into the vernacular and exposed his soul: "Go on, lads, sup it up, for there's plenty more. Ha! ha!! ha!!! It cost me nothing. I just wrote to the wine agents and got a lot of samples of their best. They thought I was a big buyer and they fell into the trap. In the course of a life-time one learns a lot."

That was the indecent exposure of a rancid soul.

From time to time one hears the philosophy of

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success summed up in brief maxims, and they are accepted by and acceptable to not a few.

“Fastidiousness is the enemy of success.” “A mountebank with money holds the open road to more places than Brighton.” “Even a knight-bachelor goes down before money.” “The Rolls-Royce is the royal road to anywhere.” “Brains must feed at the money-pots.” “We support the Church of course because the curate comes in handy for a fourth at Bridge.”

It seems, at times, as if the counter-dicta were justified. “The only difference between the Rolls-Royce and the Char-à-banc is that the users of the latter are uproarious, and the users of the former are merely uproarious in a different way.” “Loudness has other expressions besides mouth-organs. There is a loudness in a tweed suit and plus fours that is more artistically insulting and degrading than in raucous throats yelling for ‘That Coal-black Mammy of Mine.’ Loudness in demeanour is the most intolerable of all.” “There is no purging for vulgarity in a peerage.”

There was an appreciation of the dangers attending success in the attitude of the eminently successful nonconformist who, when offered a knighthood, took time to reflect. The cause of his reflection was the recollection that it is written in the Scriptures that in the Celestial City “there is no (k)night there” ! The gentleman hesitated lest he should jeopardize his chance of success in another place. The “K” was pointed out to him, and I understand he gave £5

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to some organization for the sons of the poor Clergy as a thank-offering for the providential arrangement that enabled him to make the best of both worlds. That "K" made all the difference both to him and to the sons of the poor Clergy!

Curiously enough most of the splendid lives that I have known were those of people who were poor. Poor but independent. Thrifty. Limiting their luxuries and living within their means. Generous out of their scantiness. Nor were their lives drab and uninteresting. They were full of those interests, joys and shadows, loyal to old virtues and standards of good taste that, I imagine, make up the most worthy part of the English society.

They found in domestic ties and in kinship and friendship outlets for every healthy emotion and impulse.

And it is of these we think when we refer to the good old times.

There are tens of thousands who still direct their lives along such stable lines. It may be that the Press with its enormous issue of daily and weekly papers gives an impression of restlessness that is only superficial. We see more of the world than our forefathers, the scope of our interests is wider, the details of a teeming world, political, social, financial, athletic, are set before our gaze, and we imagine that there is no home life and no ordered domesticity.

Wait by the Embankment in the evening or by the stations and see the thousands upon thousands hastening homewards—clerks, warehousemen, shop assistants,

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navvies, message-boys, and here and there the stock-broker and solicitor.

A teeming multitude greater than any Derby ever saw, greater than any Stadium in the world could hold.

These are the workers who eat bread in the sweat of their brows. Money is needed to keep the light shining in their homes and in the eyes of those who wait for their return. The price of a dinner *à deux* provides a week at Margate and the antics of Charles Chaplin bring healthy laughter and colour to their leisure.

The City is the great factory where thousands work, and the inspiration to their labours lies in those homely virtues that can so easily be lost and when once lost are like a lost paradise.

* * * * *

At nightfall London becomes a magic city. Every street and alleyway is peopled with ghosts and shadows. The great buildings become alive with history and the faces of the storied dead seem to peer at you at every street corner.

In Cornhill there comes surging out of memory lines that bring healing and composure in their words :

“ The curfew tolls the knell of parting day,
The lowing herds wind slowly o’er the lea,
The ploughman homewards plods his weary way,
And leaves the world to darkness and to me.”

And one waits by the place where Thomas Gray was born.

Hard by in Bread Street John Milton was ushered into a world that held for him hardships and blindness,

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and out of these experiences he wove a music which will live whilst the English race endures.

In Fleet Street we meet with Dr. Johnson and Oliver Goldsmith, and in the quietness of the Temple lines that we had forgotten come stealing back from "The Deserted Village."

St. Paul's keeps watch and the boom of the hours across the deserted City adds a new touch of emotion too deep for words or speech. Those tones have rung across this city and marked the march of Time as England watched crises in her history. They have chimed for great pageantries and rolled across the coffins of the distinguished dead. They have sounded over the weeping forms of women as they were telling God of the greatness of their grief.

To feel the ravishment of the City by night one must walk alone. No friendship is intimate enough with which to share its glamour and glory, because the things that we listen for and see are the things that are woven into our minds and hearts. They are experiences all our own set to a music that only we can understand. Those phantom faces that we see, whose voices we listen to and to whose inspirations we respond are only seen and heard and felt by us alone.

Memories of boyhood and of England twine and intertwine, and a thousand ideas of association. Now it is by the shores of County Down, now it is on the highlands by the Cheviots, now it is by a graveside near the little Meeting-house at Magheragall, dreams of youth, dreams of old sorrows and old successes, dreams

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of old books and poems and songs. A bewilderment of a past active and alive and glorious.

On London Bridge we watch the outflow of the river or its sweeping waters racing back towards the green glades by Sunbury and Laleham. Thoughts are stirred that carry us to far-off lands and far-off friends and to leisure hours in sunny days within the sight of Eton.

Here and there in the City some caretaker watches from an office window and the constable keeps watch and ward, touching this door and that, or examining the lock upon some outer gate. As we pass on through this quiet place of ghosts and memories we see a glimpse of a great philosophy in the words that we learnt in our childhood : " Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon the earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal."

No moth or rust can corrupt, no thief can break through and steal my priceless treasure that is hidden within the square mile of the City that is mine.

CHAPTER VI

THE LITTLE RED BOOK OF LONDON

ON his admission to the freedom of the City every freeman is presented with a little red book lettered in gold under the City arms, and entitled, "Rules for the Conduct of Life." The full title as appears in the frontispiece is "Some Rules for the Conduct of Life, to which are added a few cautions for the use of such freemen of London as take apprentices."

There are thirty-six rules in this little treatise and they are a compound of shrewd worldly wisdom begotten in experience and the piety and fear of the Lord that were characteristic of our forefathers. No name appears as the author of the book and it has neither introduction nor dedication. It is a masterpiece of brevity, sanity and restraint, and one listens to the considered judgments on life from one who had experimented with it and knew both its temptations and its triumphs. This little book deserves a wider publicity, and City apprentices who desire the key to prosperity and, what is better, peace of mind and contentment might well ponder over the quaint sentences of its pages.

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The book was written by Sir John Barnard, Lord Mayor in 1737-8. It was first published in 1740 and was intended for City apprentices. Later the Corporation undertook its publication and a copy is given to every freeman on his admission.

Sir John Barnard took a most prominent part in the civil and political life of the City. He was Member of Parliament for the City 1722-1761, Alderman 1728, Sheriff 1735, Lord Mayor 1737, Master of the Grocers' Company 1738. He was regarded as an authority on trade and finance. His second daughter was the mother of the second Viscount Palmerston and grandmother of the third Viscount, who became Prime Minister.

The writer of the little book took a serious view of life, and in the forefront of the qualities that make for success he places discipline, foresight and self-reliance. Nor does he ignore the circumstances that, at times, men have sown but do not reap and have endeavoured but do not succeed. He has a quiet philosophy with which to face the experiences that he had seen overtake mankind. There is little dogmatism, no boasting, no obtrusion either of his personality or his success. The rules are spoken out of the shadows and they are left to be judged by those who test them. He urges the apprentices to fix a policy for their life and effort.

Rule I.—“Whatever you at any time intend to do, consider the end which you therein propose to yourself, and be sure that it be always really good

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or at least innocent. He who does anything, and knows not why or wherefore, acts foolishly : and he who aims at an unlawful end acts wickedly, which is the worst sort of folly. If you are careful always to observe this fundamental rule you will thereby avoid many sins which would disturb your conscience and also many trifling actions which would tend to your discredit, or trouble your repose."

Intelligent anticipation would have spared most men many regrets. "Considering the end which we proposed" would have brought into play judgment and reflection and attached a deliberation that would have made our actions impossible.

This simple rule is so universal, so homely, so fundamental that it could only have been drafted by a wise man of affairs who had lived a life very varied and intense.

Rule II.—"When you have thus fixed upon a proper end to aim at in each action, then consider not only what are the lawful means to be used in order to this end, but also how these means are best to be applied. That which is unlawful ought not to be done, even for the obtaining of a good end ; and means in themselves good have often failed of success for want of prudence in the management of them."

The wisdom, brevity and shrewdness of this rule is a delight. An experienced man of the world said the other day that he had known as many men fail through bad manners as through bad morals.

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“Knowing your job” is supposed to be the sole qualification of success, but experience demonstrates every day that it is untrue.

The “Oxford manner” has carried some men further than a first class of London University or the doctorate in Laws of Aberdeen.

Rule III.—“When you are seeking for a good end, proper means, and the right way of using them, remember that the knowledge of all this must not rest on idle speculation or plausible discourse, but ought to be effectually reduced to practice, as often as you have an opportunity for it. The man who thinks wisely and discourses judiciously is never to be excused if his practice, when there is occasion for it, is not answerable to his thoughts and words.”

What a glorious test! Men are challenged to put to the test the principles they profess, and there is ruled out all those hazy day-dreams and poetic fancies that the Irishman called “balloon juice.”

And the Rule is illustrated as was fitting in the eighteenth century with an apt Biblical quotation which happens to be true in the twentieth century:

“And that servant which knew his lord’s will and prepared not himself, neither did according to his will, shall be beaten with many stripes.”—Luke xii., 47.

In twentieth-century English and metaphor we call it “getting the sack!”

The wise philosopher, then, sums up these three

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rules and, recognizing the fact of failure in human affairs, adds a word of encouragement and consolation to those who, having fought well, failed in the battle. There, indeed, are words of gold which lift the efforts of men into a higher region than the success that is visible and tangible. "If you proceed," he writes, "in this manner, you will certainly obtain the great end you propose to yourself in the life to come: and, if you fall short of some things which you desire in this world, you will have this comfort, that God thinks fit to deny them to you, not for any fault of yours but for other good reasons, which He knows though you do not."

With such a philosophy life may know disappointment, but it cannot know despair, and even disappointment is softened by the reflection suggested by the writer that if we knew all we should ask for the thing that came to pass.

I confess to a belief that the present generation is losing much in consolation, inspiration, courage, and faith by its ignorance of the cardinal principles of Reformation Theology.

Much requires qualification, much requires restating in terms of modern speech, but the principles by which our forefathers shaped their lives and conduct added dignity to human existence and fearlessness in face of death and misfortune. It is a sombre suggestion, but I think it is well at times to visualize our life from the angle of death and all that death imports. If to some it brings elements of terror, such an experience might sober and restrain.

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And no amount of ignoring can evade the overshadowing presence.

In Rules IV. and V. Life is viewed from just that angle, because it is unescapable to any reflective mind, and in Rule VI. he says: "The only sure way to die well and at peace with God is to live well. It is a foolish thing to rely upon what is very improperly called a death-bed repentance. Repentance consists in a reformation of life; and what an absurd thing it is for a man to pretend to reform his life when life itself is just at an end."

Then follow a series of rules indicating the manner and method of living well, but the author does not ignore that to live well is an arduous undertaking and there is an exact analysis of the factors that are necessary to achieve it.

"Reason is the rudder wherewith you are to steer your course and religion the compass by which you are to guide it; but resolution is the wind that will set you forward without which your sails will often flag."

In Rule XII. there is this quaint sentence, but it contains a challenge, "Be in reality what you are willing to be thought to be."

"Every man desires to be thought honest, just, and virtuous that thereby he may gain love and good will from all that know him. Now the only sure way to be thought so is to be so."

Then there follow rules on civic virtues and neigh-

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bourliness. These rules lift our common life into a divine relationship with our fellow men. Perhaps they embody ideals impossible of achievement, but though we miss the stars we at least have set our faces towards the light.

“Be in charity with all men; that is, fill your heart with a sincere love for all mankind—friends, strangers and even enemies, if you have any. . . . Root out from your mind all envy, malice, hatred and all ill-nature—these are the storms and tempests of the soul and the chief causes of all the disturbances in the world. . . .”

“In many cases you innocently may, and sometimes you ought, by lawful means to defend yourself from an injury; but never do or say anything beyond what is necessary for your own just defence or by way of revenge.”

“Scarce any man is capable of hating another who he finds sincerely loves him.”

There are indicated the ways and means of maintaining happy relations with intimates and acquaintances.

“Affability and innocent cheerfulness in conversation very much tend to maintain good-will and agreement amongst those who converse together. Abstain from all biting and satirical jests and speeches, which will be remembered by others when they are forgotten by yourself. There is no man but will take it ill to

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be set in an odious or ridiculous light, although it be but in sport."

Stress is laid upon one's duty to the poor and distressed, and it is indicated that a stewardship attaches to good fortune. There is set out with deliberation the doctrine that must sound curious to the Georgian Age.

"Remember that the fortune you enjoy is not your own but God's. He is the proprietor, you are only the steward of it and must one day give a strict account of your stewardship."

One wonders whether Capitalism or Communism is the more likely to accept this hard test.

Rule XVI. is the embodiment of the homely incentive to effort and ambition that persisted in old-fashioned homes throughout the Victorian Era. I understand that in unsophisticated areas echoes of the old teaching may sometimes be heard. It contains, too, a note of consolation, that is not untinged with a beneficent fatalism that squares with the facts of experience.

All success is not visible, and life has other standards of achievement than the Stock Exchange or the Deposit Department of a Provincial Bank. And there are defined limits to the operations of the human will. Why, then, should one fret and fume? Apparent misfortune has not seldom been the womb of happiness and failure has been the straight roadway to success.

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At all events, in each life some purpose is in course of fulfilment.

“Be content with your own condition whatsoever it be. Endeavour by honest labour and industry to make your circumstances better than they are, for the good both of yourself and others ; but if such your endeavours do not meet with success, or if heavy afflictions bear hard upon you, remember that God governs the world by a particular providence ; that a sparrow does not fall to the ground without Him.”

Then there follow a series of rules that embody shrewd worldly wisdom, and to each of them the author attaches a Scriptural quotation to indicate that worldly wisdom may be the embodiment of a divine sanction.

“Meddle not with the affairs of any other man which do not belong to you. It is a very unacceptable thing to be a busybody in other men’s matters either by word or deed.”

“Engage not in any party quarrels lest you be crushed between them.”

Rules are given against idleness, slothfulness, and indifference. On the other hand no obligation attaches to any man to undertake more than he can reasonably and efficiently accomplish.

“Engage yourself in no more business than what you find yourself able to go through with ; the

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want of this caution has made the life of many a man uneasy and unhappy, and involved his family and friends in numberless troubles and perplexities."

"When you find yourself able to do a thing without the assistance of anyone but God, never put it or any part of it off to be done by any other man of whose honesty, sufficiency and industry you cannot be so sure, as in such a case, you may be of your own. But if you find that you want the help of others, let not the vanity of having all the praise to yourself make you decline it lest the good you aim at may thereby be lost."

Warnings are given against procrastination, and missing the tide that is in the affairs of men.

"If you neglect a proper opportunity you may not perhaps meet with it again: whereas by laying hold of it when it offers, you will be able to dispatch much business in a little time: and if you accustom yourself to rise early, you will find that you have time enough to do all the business that you have to do, and much more than persons who rise late will think possible to be done."

There is a mine of wisdom in Rule XXVIII. It is full of vision and philosophy.

"Consult with yourself and with others who are knowing and honest, about everything of moment which you are to undertake: but waste not that time

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in unprofitable talk which may be better employed in action. Thought is quick; and when a wise man is once well-informed (of which he will take care) he will not be long in deliberating what is best to be done: but many a good opportunity has been lost by too much consultation. A wise man thinks much, which is soon done; but speaks no more than is necessary, being a good husband of time, which is very precious."

This rule should be conspicuous in every place where men deliberate together, and its applicability ranges from Cabinet deliberations to those of Non-conformist deacons in the village chapel. The men who talk most have thought least, and men talk because in any Assembly or Committee it is the only outlet for Egotism.

The wide experience of life of the writer is demonstrated in the concluding rules in his little book. One wonders at the scope of his knowledge and the width of his wisdom. He has observed what few appear to understand, viz., that youth can be mispent in pursuit of virtue no less than in the pursuit of vice. I have heard more men than one lament the loss of youth and its dreams and its golden occasions before they awoke to the glory, but then the glory had departed.

As I have written in another place, "he was less than a cynic who once confessed that the things I regret most in looking backwards are my virtues."

The Rule reads :

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“Take some proper time to relax your thoughts from business that you may be better able to return. A heavy load constantly borne without intermission will waste your strength and make you unfit for everything.”

The author then recommends reading, and utters a warning against “such books as are licentious or profane; these may well be compared to palatable poison.”

“Entertain yourself in the society of friends and with such conversation as may enliven your spirits without corrupting your heart.”

“Use moderate exercise of such kind as is most agreeable to you, most suited to your constitution and most conducive to your health. Or there may be no harm in sometimes amusing yourself at any of the customary games of chance and skill. But never play for anything that is more than you or your friend may win or lose without any manner of concern. Remember it is designed to be diversion, not business. If it employs too much of your time or thought or provokes your passions, it changes its nature, loses its end and ceases to be innocent.”

* * * * *

“Take care of your health as well for the sake of your relations and dependants as for your own sake. Upon a principle of conscience, therefore, be strictly sober, and temperate in eating and drinking. Sick-

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ness is always a melancholy condition, but most of all so when it is caused by a man's own irregularity and intemperance."

"At all times keep your passions under your command. Let them ever be guided by your reason, but never be a guide to it. Like fire and water, they are good servants, but bad masters; and if you suffer them to lead your reason, they will often betray you to say and do such things as will hurt yourself, disoblige your friends, create your enemies and expose you to scorn and contempt."

Advice is given on overcoming temptation, and there occurs this wise suggestion, "The surest way to keep yourself pure is to fly from temptation."

"It is much safer not to be wounded than afterwards to be healed with a scar left behind; to keep your enemy at a distance than to engage with him when the victory is uncertain."

And after admonition on good company and discreet behaviour, the rules conclude in this wise:

"Remember that you are a Christian and be neither ashamed nor afraid to speak and act like one upon all occasions; neither affecting to be a saint nor dreading to be deemed a hypocrite by any man for so doing."

This little book is full of the cardinal principles

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of Reformation Theology and philosophy. It bears the mental impress of a mind which accepted and acted upon the great doctrine of the Sovereignty of God. There is in it wisdom, humility, strength and consciousness of weakness. Over all is a dread of offending the Creator.

Out of such principles and with the co-operation of such men has been built up the characteristic qualities of the British race. The British race is a Protestant race. Its virility is one expression of Protestantism, as are its Constitution, its Colonial polity, its ideals, its restraints and its sacrifices. Without the Protestant Reformation and without the principles of Luther and Calvin there could have been no British Empire. Political freedom is not the fruition of the mind enslaved.

And, however quixotic it may seem, I should advise thoughtful youths of London to ponder over such a book as this, and such another as the Shorter Catechism of the Westminster Divines. These gather up the wisdom of many generations, and if, perchance, here and there a crudity of history, or science, or philosophy seems evident, it may be well to reflect that none of these has spoken the last word.

Of this they may be certain, that in following the principles of "the little Red Book of London" they are pursuing wisdom, whose ways are ways of pleasantness and whose paths are paths of peace.

CHAPTER VII

THE POLICE COURTS OF THE METROPOLIS

IN the vast and complex machinery of Criminal administration and the maintenance of public order and well-being, there is no part more dramatic, more picturesque, more coloured with the moods, emotions, passions and frailties of the human race than the Police Courts of the Metropolis. They are the most cosmopolitan Courts in the world, because London is the world's most cosmopolitan city.

They see more of life and life's comedy and tragedy than the Central Criminal Court or the County of London Sessions, for only a small section of prisoners are sent forward for trial by jury and the Police Courts have a wider jurisdiction than the trial of offenders against the Criminal Law. In part we impinge on the civil work of a County Court; and in part we impinge on the loftier sphere of the Admiralty and Divorce Division of the High Court of Justice, but we have our own exclusive area in that all the problems that perplex a neighbourhood are brought morning by morning to the Police Court. We are counted as competent to find the solution of every problem and to tone and temper human

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nature to such a degree that disagreeable neighbours become tolerant and affectionate, and erring and wayward spouses fulfil in letter and in spirit the obligations they undertook in the romantic days that preceded the wearing of the chains of matrimony. We are invited to arrange the washing-days of disputants, so that each may have a sufficient use of the "copper" and its consequent supply of hot water. We are a shield and buckler to all that are oppressed.

Day after day these courts see the nuclei of a hundred dramas. All the tragedy, folly, mis-adventure and sin of the Metropolis is weighed and sifted and judged within their walls. There the scales of Justice are balanced and adjusted, and all the circumstances of every discovered offence against the law is considered and determined. Through the dock of the Police Court every prisoner must pass on his way to be judged by a jury of his countrymen, and it is the Metropolitan Magistrate who decides whether an accused person should be put upon his trial.

The legal and conventional obligations that attach to the magisterial office make great demand on the virtue, mentality, experience and wisdom of magistrates, but a man cannot elude his temperament nor evade his experiences.

A man might be too virtuous to appreciate the temptations of the wicked, and too seriously minded to understand the follies of the frail. Indignant righteousness might become the minister of injustice. Knowledge of the law is important, but knowledge

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of human nature is indispensable. And too devout an attachment to precedent might be lacking in a recognition of the human elements. Judging mankind is a responsible undertaking, and it is easier to misjudge than to judge. And misjudgment has a ready way of breeding revolt and hatred.

A broken man may not be the true atonement of a broken law, and forgiveness may carry the dynamic of a superlative recovery.

Sentiment may fail, but so may severity. And a wide acquaintance with the denizens of the dock should lead the reflective to considered judgments.

It is fixed by statute that Metropolitan Magistrates must be practising barristers of at least seven years' standing. Perhaps there is a camaraderie in crime that leads to an understanding heart though one of the comrades is in the dock and the other is in another place.

Whatever be the limitations of the present generation, the Metropolitan Magistrates have inherited great traditions, and the public confidence must be the fruition of generations of faithful men who won and held the esteem of their fellow citizens. And no man need ask for a larger field of opportunity in which to serve London and London's people.

The Metropolitan Police Courts have all the attributes of the ordinary Courts of Summary Jurisdiction, but they have others by virtue of special statutes and by conventions. The function of advising on law, ethics, good manners and minor courtesies has grown up *ex necessitate*. And though the Magistrates of

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the Police Courts of the Metropolis have been grafted into the Commission of the Peace and become Justices of the Counties of London, Middlesex, Herts, Surrey and Kent their traditions, associations and duties have special characteristics social and historical.

The evolution of the Metropolitan Police Courts and the Metropolitan Police is the history of the social life of London during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries; and no institutions have been in such intimate touch with the people or left a more enduring impress on the life of the Metropolis. This is the history of London, beside which the history that is taught in universities and schools is only an emasculated record of wars, politics and statecraft.

A king was crowned here and buried there. This cabal or that made X or Y Prime Minister, or P Chancellor of the Exchequer and Q Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster. It is all devoid of vitality, actuality and human interest. It is untrue because it is circumscribed—and it avoids the doings, impulses, and adventures of the millions. The factors that wove out the common day of the inarticulate multitudes are ignored as of no account.

Hogarth is the truer historian of the eighteenth-century London. The Newgate Calendar is the record that is red with reality and very often wet with the tears of a terrible despair. Our generation has its problems and they are not easy of solution. There are social and economic issues that touch intimately tens of thousands of London's people, but they are less menacing and less persistent than

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those that existed for the philanthropist and the community in eighteenth-century London.

London was beset with organized bands of malefactors. And the highways leading to and from the Metropolis were infested with highwaymen.

Crime became a highly organized profession, and those who were peace-officers and public officials were the leaders in the profession. The career of Jonathan Wild and his partner Charles Kitchin, the City Marshal, is illustrative.

“These celebrated co-partners in villainy, under the pretext of reforming the manners of the dissolute part of the public, paraded the streets from Temple Bar to the Minories, searching houses of ill-fame and apprehending disorderly and suspected persons; but such as complimented these public reformers with private douceurs were allowed to practise every species of wickedness with impunity.”

Wild used his reputation and position to obtain a strangle-hold on the professional criminal. Those who were bold enough to refuse his terms were surrendered to justice. By subjecting those who incurred his displeasure to the punishment of the law he obtained the rewards offered for pursuing them to conviction, extended his ascendancy over the criminal community and established a reputation for good citizenship and loyalty to the Crown.

Like modern company promoters, Wild kept a close eye on the requirements of Statute Law, and as new

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laws were made Wild devised suitable methods of evasion.

An act was passed, aimed definitely at Wild and declaring that every person who should accept a reward in consideration of restoring stolen goods without prosecuting the thief should be guilty of felony.

Wild now declined to accept money from the persons who applied to him for assistance, but on the further importunity of the owner of the stolen goods he insinuated that all he had been able to learn about the goods was that if a sum of money were left at any appointed place the property would be restored.

On leaving Wild's house the owner would be accosted by a stranger who produced the lost property, also a note indicating the amount that was due for such restoration. And on such occasions Wild would indicate to the persons who had recovered their property that what he had done was merely from his principle of doing good, and therefore he made no claim and expected no reward, and any acknowledgment of his services was taken as an expression of the generosity and good will of the donor.

Ultimately Wild was arrested and the information laid against him is an indication of the state of London in the eighteenth century.

I.—That for many years he had been a confederate with great numbers of highwaymen, pickpockets, house-breakers, shop-lifters and other thieves.

II.—That he had formed a kind of corporation of thieves, of which he was the head or director, and

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that, notwithstanding his pretended services in detecting and prosecuting offenders, he procured such only to be hanged as concealed their booty or refused to share it.

III.—That he had divided the town and county into districts and appointed district gangs for each, who regularly accounted with him for their robberies. That he had a particular set to attend at Court, on birthdays, balls, etc., and at both Houses of Parliament, Circuits and country fairs.

IV.—That the persons employed by him were for the most part felons convict, who had returned from transportation before the time for which they were transported had expired; and that he made choice of them to be his agents because they could not be legal evidence against him, and because he had it in his power to take from them what part of the stolen goods he thought fit, and otherwise use them ill, or hang them as he pleased.

V.—That he had from time to time supplied such convicted felons with money and clothes and lodged them in his own house, the better to conceal them: particularly some against whom there are now informations for counterfeiting and diminishing broad pieces and guineas.

VI.—That he had not only been a receiver of stolen goods, as well as of writings of all kinds, for fifteen years past, but had frequently been a confederate and robbed along with the above-mentioned convicted felons.

VII.—That, in order to carry on these vile practices,

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to gain some credit with the ignorant multitude he usually carried a short silver staff, as a badge of authority from the Government, which he used to produce when he himself was concerned in robbing.

VIII.—That he had, under his care and direction several warehouses for receiving and concealing stolen goods ; and also a ship for carrying off jewels, watches, and other valuable goods to Holland, where he had a superannuated thief for his factor.

IX.—That he kept in his pay several artists to make alterations, and transform watches, seals, rings, and other valuable things, that they might not be known, several of which he used to present to such persons as he thought might be useful to him.

X.—That he has often sold human blood by procuring false evidence to swear persons into facts they were not guilty of ; sometimes to prevent them from being evidence against himself and at other times for the sake of the great reward given by the Government.

* * * * *

Wild had many imitators, and every citizen was subjected to the probability of being beaten and robbed and to the possibility of being accused of some capital felony. The best endeavours of the Government to secure public order only increased the jeopardy of honest citizens. About 1749 there had been a considerable demobilization of men from the Army and the Fleet and great numbers of discharged seamen and soldiers resorted to London, and to prevent the increase in robberies it was deemed expedient

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to offer additional rewards for the arrest of those who were guilty of the felony. The passing of the Act created a new danger that menaced every passer-by in the Metropolis. This received a dramatic exemplification in the partnership formed by four men, McDaniel, Berry, Egan and Salmon to accuse innocent persons of capital felonies for the sake of the rewards paid upon conviction. It was several years before this terrible conspiracy was discovered, and in the meantime many innocent men were tried, convicted and executed.

A man of humble circumstances was met by McDaniel, who said he would make him the present of a horse as he had no further use for it. The present was joyfully accepted and McDaniel advised the new owner that he might put it up at an inn in Smithfield until he had made arrangements for its keep. On the way to Smithfield the man was seized with the horse in his possession and he was taken before the sitting Justice, by whom he was committed to Newgate. After trial at the Old Bailey he was convicted and executed. For this conviction the conspirators received the Government's bounty.

* * * * *

Central London was honeycombed with areas given over to the lowest and most dangerous criminal population. Clare Market, Drury Lane and Covent Garden were peopled exclusively by thieves, cut-throats and prostitutes. Each parish had its own system of watch and ward, and the peace-officers were

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The police establishment of the Metropolis then consisted of the Bow Street horse patrol and the Bow Street "runners," the latter of whom were available for pursuing criminals and solving problems that beset the authorities in any area; the police attached to the various Police Offices as established in 1782 by the Middlesex Justices Act and controlled by the Magistrates attached to those offices; the River Police under the control of the Magistrate at the Thames Court.

On 26th April, 1816, a Committee sat on "The State of the Police of the Metropolis," and the report of that Committee was issued the same year. The Committee made a most exhaustive inquiry, and its report is a terrible revelation into the social condition of London. Black waters of despair washed through her streets, and age and childhood were swept into prison houses unsanitary and unwholesome. There was no publicity and no pity. Decent citizens dwelt in a world apart, and only at nightfall, if they were abroad, did they have contact with the outcasts of the Metropolis.

The records give a vivid revelation of abandoned and criminal children that moved to pity a section of the people in an age much less generous than our own. Unfortunate criminals met with little consideration. The Law had a strong belief in teaching by example, and whilst the meshes of the law were wide and the police system primitive and incomplete enough to allow the cunning and experienced to escape, not

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seldom the victim of a sudden temptation or some unhappy conspiracy was treated as a warning and as an example to his own and succeeding generations.

Public hanging was the normal penalty for felonies, and whatever may have been the doctrinal fidelity and ecclesiastical devotion of our forefathers they tolerated and justified a policy of law that in our time appears savage and malignant. Criminals were taken in open carts from Newgate to Tyburn and exposed to the vituperation of the mob, and if public indignation had been deeply moved by their misdeeds they were pelted with filth on their journey to the scaffold.

Insecurity always makes for savagery, and those sorrowful revelations are only an expression of society fighting for security and social peace. Mr. Colquhoun, author of a treatise on "The Police of the Metropolis," is credited with the vision that a preventive police could secure social order at a less cost of sorrow and despair. He aimed at sparing society the terrible wreckage of its offenders that was a disgrace to London. The proposals were considered by a special Committee who reported on the details of the scheme, and in 1829 the Metropolitan Police Act was passed. The preamble to the Act sums up briefly and effectively the condemnation of the older police system :

"Whereas offences against property have of late increased in and near the Metropolis and the local establishments of nightly watch and nightly police have been found inadequate to the prevention and detection of crime, by reason of the frequent unfitness

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of the individuals employed, the insufficiency of their number, the limited sphere of their authority and their want of connection and co-operation with each other : and whereas it is expedient to substitute a new and more efficient system of police in lieu of such establishments of nightly watch and nightly police within the limits hereinafter mentioned and to constitute an office of police, which acting under the immediate authority of one of His Majesty's Principal Secretaries of State shall direct and control the whole of such new system of police within those limits."

By this Act a new Metropolitan police was established in the City of Westminster controlled and directed by Commissioners of police. In the other Metropolitan areas the police were under the control and direction of the Magistrates at the Police Offices.

In 1837-38 a Select Committee sat to inquire into the existing system, and they submitted a unanimous report to the House of Commons. They had before them ten years' experience of the working of the new Metropolitan police force established in 1829, and its success impelled to a recommendation of its extension and unification.

They recommended, therefore, that it would tend to a more satisfactory administration of justice if Police Magistrates were called upon to execute such duties only as are of a judicial character, and if all the duties of an executive nature were committed to the charge of the Metropolitan Police Force ;

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they recommended, further, that, owing to the increase in the population and extent of the population since the public offices were established, there should be an increase in the number of such offices.

The Metropolitan Police Act, 1839, altered the mode of appointing Magistrates. It was directed that all appointments should be filled directly from the Bar and the barristers so appointed were made magistrates of the several counties over which the Metropolitan Police district extends.

The following year new Courts were set up in accordance with the recommendation of the Select Committee. These new Courts are North London, West London, South-Western, Greenwich and Woolwich.

And by this Act the duties of the Bow Street horse patrol, the police office constables attached to the various offices, and the River police under the control of the Thames Magistrate, were transferred to the new Metropolitan police force set up by the Act of 1829.

This Act completed the unification of the Metropolitan police, and all the area, save the City of London, is now under the control and supervision of one body directed by a Commissioner, but it also severed the connection between the Metropolitan Magistrates and the police. The Magistrates became judicial officers and retained no association with the executive. Their functions are exclusively concerned with the administration of justice.

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The Magistrates of the Police Courts are appointed by the Crown, and are put on the Commission of the Peace of all the counties that are under the control of the Metropolitan police. Each magistrate has jurisdiction in every Metropolitan Police Court within that area. The Chief Magistrate at Bow Street is *primus inter pares*, and his jurisdiction and powers are identical with those of his colleagues.

Sir N. Conant, Chief Magistrate, summed up in his evidence before the Committee in 1816, the relationship between the Magistrates on the Metropolitan Bench.

Q.—“Is there not some sort of pre-eminence in Bow Street, some sort of control that the Magistrates of Bow Street have over the other officers?”

A.—“Not in the least. Nothing can be more distinct. Every magistrate aids and assists in the general object without the least idea of superiority or importance in one more than the other. I am not quite sure that I did not feel my own importance as great when I was an individual magistrate at Marlborough Street, as now that I am entitled the Chief Magistrate in Bow Street—excepting that it brings me more immediately within the confidence of His Majesty’s Government.”

Such is the evolution of two of the most attractive institutions in the Metropolis. Like most English institutions, they have grown up in response to some necessity. They were shaped and adapted to needs as they arose.

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The Metropolitan police are an expression of the faith of the English people in freedom. They are a body living in intimate touch with the rank and file of the people, undertaking the normal responsibilities, civil and domestic, of their neighbours, without privileges, without political attachments, in every sense free, yet they maintain the public weal and retain the public confidence. Their body is the culmination of faith—unarmed, detached, civilians amongst civilians, they unify civil freedom and official loyalty. The Metropolitan police is a dramatic illustration of the English spirit and temper.

Amongst the poor the Metropolitan Police Courts stand as the expression and embodiment of the Law. House of Lords, Privy Council, Courts of Appeal, Chancery and King's Bench Division of the High Courts of Justice, count for nothing. They are never visualized or considered. Nor do the poor strictly define legal rights and obligations. Morality and Law are very indeterminate and they cannot understand where one ends and the other begins. So they bring all their personal and social grievances to the Bench.

A Metropolitan Police Court is the clearing house of Metropolitan distractions and disturbances, and it is much that these in their humble way have imbued the minds of the people with a faith in ordered law.

CHAPTER VIII

THE PSYCHOLOGY OF A POLICE COURT

THE dominating quality of the English people, perhaps of the British race, is their utter disregard of logic. Of metaphysics they are contemptuously disdainful, and their attitude to psychology is determined, and limited, by the lessons of experience. The English are non-speculative and divinely or diabolically practical. They do the tasks that lie nearest to their hands and adapt their machinery, legal and administrative, *ad hoc*, to varying situations as they arise. They are as all their fathers were until circumstances compel them to be otherwise: then their adaptability, comprehension, patience and tenacity are dramatic and spectacular. They only move to the compulsion of necessity. They dislike change, but they develop. They go from precedent to precedent. The position and power of the Justice of the Peace is, perhaps, the crowning illustration of the indifference to logic of the British race, and of the daring risks that they take to achieve a practical result. When stated in bald terms it is so illogical as to be incredible, and so daring as to be a joke. From time to time the newspapers give illustrations of the achieve-

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ment of the incredible, and the jokes have become the chestnuts of the smoking-room at every club.

The British people pay their Lord Chancellor £10,000 a year and provide him with a residence and a retinue, though the days of his Chancellorship be few and full of trouble. They pay their ex-Lord Chancellors singly and severally £5,000 a year, though the days of their ex-pilgrimage be long and full of leisure. Yet the titular Head of the Judiciary is less directly concerned with the liberty of the subject than the unpaid justice of the peace who levies fines, imposes imprisonment and sends to long terms of penal servitude. Seldom, indeed, does a Lord Chancellor send a man to prison; but such a task is the daily routine of a justice of the peace. The Lord Chancellor is chosen usually from among the flower of the Bar—men of scholarship, ripe experience, and profound knowledge of the law. The justice of the peace is chosen from the railway track and from the mine, from the farm and the shop, and from the drawing-rooms of Kensington. The one demands an intimate knowledge and practice of the law, the other can be fulfilled in a complete legal astigmatism. Those who advise unhappy prisoners must be skilled in the law and those who plead for them must have given proof of their knowledge; but those who deliver judgments, levy fines and take from men their reputation and their liberty, are subject to no tests, and the factors that have lifted them to the place of judgment are as numerous as they are varied. The only non-essential is knowledge of the law. Perhaps

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the following story is apocryphal, but it may be accepted as parabolical.

A prisoner was charged with the offence of sacrilege, and on the charge being read over to him he hesitated as to what he should say. Then one of the justices asked the clerk whether the charge could not be reduced to one of common assault if the prisoner promised to marry the girl. The learned justice knew that at least there had been an offence against good morals !

It is recorded of another, that he never *quite* mastered the difference between an assault and an insult—a difference that appears to bother a good many suitors at police courts. Perhaps he was more to be excused who, on the submission of counsel that certain evidence was admissible as part of the *res gestæ*, inquired whether the usual period was not nine months ! The county justice, who, on appeal, wished to decide an issue as a protest against the Defence of the Realm Regulations because they were hampering trade, showed less of the judicial detachment than is considered desirable. The evidence in the case appeared irrelevant in view of his own testimony : “ I know this for a fact ! ” .

One is sometimes tempted to believe that a charge of felony is almost as serious for an individual as a chill, and that a charge of misdemeanour may be as inconvenient as an attack of gout. Incarceration in Pentonville or Strangeways can be as tiresome as incarceration in a well-fired bedroom. Yet imprisonment can be measured out by those who have no

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acquaintance with maladies at law, but the man who keeps us in bed and orders gruel and milk-pudding must have given years to the study and practice of medicine. An order to stay in jail needs less skill than an order to stay in bed! Some men become physicians of our social maladies automatically. By virtue of the rule of "rotation" they become qualified to impose burdens and withdraw freedom. They are returned as members of an Urban or Rural District Council and year by year, as the chairman changes, each man becomes in turn for a year a justice of the peace, with all the powers of imprisonment that such possess. In the obscurity of some petty sessions serious wrong can be done. It may only be a hind or a tramp, but it is upon such that the brand of prison works the most grievous hurt. The prisoner may become a "broken man" and an outcast from the community.

The judicial and administrative area of justices is very extensive, and it is impossible to exaggerate its importance. In the sphere of criminal jurisdiction there is no offence that does not come before the courts of summary jurisdiction, from poaching and drunkenness to fraud and murder. In the case of more serious offences it is true that they only hold a preliminary inquiry in order to find out whether sufficient grounds exist to put a prisoner on his trial before a jury. A preliminary inquiry! It sounds simple enough, but no larger and more serious duty could be imposed on the human judgment.

It involves :

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(1) An appreciation of the elements that constitute the offence.

(2) An appreciation of the evidence by which the commission of the offence is proven.

(3) A decision whether the justices should deal with the charge summarily or send for trial on indictment.

(4) A decision whether the evidence submitted is sufficient to warrant a conviction for trial before a jury in indictable offences.

There are many indictable offences with which justices may deal summarily. In such cases the justices fulfil the functions of both a judge and a jury, find the prisoner guilty or not guilty; and, if they find him guilty, impose a punishment.

(5) The duty of deciding what the punishment shall be.

The prisoner may be discharged under the Probation of Offenders Act, or he may be bound over to come up for conviction and sentence. He may be fined, and the extent of the fine demands consideration, or he may be sent to prison. The pronouncement of all these punishments and penalties is the duty of the Bench. In no department of human affairs is there a more emphatic need for sanity, knowledge, sound judgment, and acquaintanceship with the world. It is easy to say "Three months hard labour," but the penalty is hard to bear. It is easy to march the

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prisoner out of the dock, but his departure raises new problems for him and new perplexities for those at home. If he be a first offender he is now a man with a lost reputation, and his punishment will pursue him long after he leaves his prison abode. But the community has to be preserved and society safeguarded. The automatic discharge of first offenders might be a direct incentive to crime; on the other hand the manufacture of convicted persons may be the best neither for the community nor for the prisoner. The interests of both have to be considered and conserved, and they are not mutually antagonistic. In all seriousness it is submitted that the office of justice of the peace is, if less imposing, no less important than the office of Lord Chancellor or Lord Chief Justice. An ill-equipped or ill-balanced justice of the peace can work as sore havoc as can an ill-equipped judge or chancellor.

The position of the justice of the peace is too deeply embedded in the social fabric of our English life to be changed. It is as characteristic and national as are our Parliamentary institutions. At one time the qualification for appointment to the Commission of the Peace almost necessarily ensured the possession of the qualities requisite for the fulfilment of the office. To-day there are practically no disqualifications at all. The recognition of the powers and privileges of the office should impel those who aspire to or fulfil the duties of the arduous and responsible position to appreciate the urgency of striving to learn the law that they administer and the rules of evidence

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by which the law must be applied. It is true that there is, in many cases, an appeal from courts of summary jurisdiction to quarter sessions, but not seldom quarter sessions repeat the essential defects of petty sessions. Here, again, is the triumph of the illogical. A wit once said in relation to appeals from Metropolitan police courts to the quarter sessions: "*Ignotum per ignotius.*" Here we have appeals from professional magistrates to lay justices.

The all-important matter is for those who hold the Commission of the Peace to appreciate that they have in their hands the liberty and reputation of those who appear before them, that to take away liberty and reputation is a thing of terrible import, that a conviction may wreck more than a reputation; and the man who makes no effort to acquire the knowledge and experience that are essential to the proper fulfilment of his office has given the fullest proof of his unfitness for the office. He is a danger to the community and a menace to the freedom of the people.

In any avocation much depends on the spirit and temper with which the day's work is begun. An irritant, petulant mood creates an atmosphere that is destructive of harmony, understanding and justice. On the Bench such a mood may result in the most grievous wrong. The judgment is warped, the mind unbalanced, and the decisions unjust. No man possesses the equable, judicial temper all the time but every man can recognize when his temper is inequable, and endeavour to qualify its moods. It

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is well, perhaps, to err on the side of generosity and to check the impulses that give expression to the opinions that flow so readily to the tongue. An unfortunate prisoner should not be made the victim of a disordered digestion, nor the "family cat" of a domestic disturbance. All occupants of the Bench are human, and suffer, at times, from such ills as the flesh is heir to. The weather, the state of trade, financial worries, a sleepless night, domestic disagreements, act and react on the mentality, and a decision may be more the expression of such a mood than the judgment of a judicial mind. A mood may make all the difference to the prisoner—the difference between a nominal fine and a substantial term of imprisonment. And it is no light matter to reflect in the sleepless hours that perhaps one was too severe or held the balance unfairly, and that the victim of our petulance is, perhaps, at that moment holding views similar to our own. For us it is uncomfortable; for him it is a tragedy.

The day's work should begin with a definite, deliberate effort to acquire the judicial temper. Particular doctrines, personal predilections, fads and fancies should be laid aside, or at least the other man's conduct should be regarded from his point of view. This will impel at least to courtesy, if not sympathy, and add to the dignity of the Bench and respect for the law. Some men illustrious for all time held unpopular views and found themselves in conflict with the law.

Justice must not be hurried. If there is a pressing

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engagement it is wisest to get a colleague to take one's place. No man can carefully weigh the evidence, analyse the facts and probe the motive and the mind of a prisoner if he has a train to catch or a Board meeting to attend. It is a wise policy to see the list of cases at the beginning of the day. There may be charges or summonses that raise important or difficult points, and these can be discussed before going on the Bench. It gives the justices an opportunity of reviewing the authorities and dealing with submissions that may be made at the hearing. Confusion and uncertainty detract from the dignity and authority of any tribunal. The Bench expects punctuality in others and should set an example in it. Apart from any loftier motive it is inconsiderate to keep the public and officials waiting. The same consideration should be given, as is expected, for the Bench exists for the public and not the public for the Bench. One hears from time to time of courts in which summonses are timed for two o'clock and the magistrates take their seats at three-thirty. Consideration is the hallmark of a gentleman.

An open mind and a closed mouth are greatly to be desired. The evidence can only be disclosed bit by bit. One fact may seem overwhelming, but another fact may tone it down and lessen its significance. Hurry and haste are fatal. As the case proceeds each fact sets itself in perspective with other facts, and it is often at the end of a case that the little more or the little less is discovered. Judgments are to be given in accordance with the evidence, and till all the

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evidence is before the Court a balanced judgment cannot be given.

Foolishness and misdemeanour are very near akin. Allowances should be made for indiscretions. Statutes are made to cover the worst cases, but sometimes the letter of the statute is violated but not the spirit. A doctrine of relativity is imperative. The penalty provided by the law is for the worst cases, and most prisoners are well within the limits. "Drunk and disorderly" covers the wide range from maudlin jollity to extreme insolence and disorder in a public place. Perhaps the former, after all, was only adding a little colour to a grey world. If forty shillings is the punishment for a disagreeable churl, what penalty atones for lilting a popular ditty upon the highway? Usually the night under arrest is a sufficient punishment for the gaiety that died before the dawn.

There are certain very definite principles that every Magistrate should take with him on the Bench. These principles are the accumulated result of the wisdom and experience of the ages, and they can only be ignored at the cost of suffering to others. The oath that every Magistrate takes emphasizes the negative aspect of his equipment. He is to fulfil his office without fear or favour, without malice or ill-will. But more than an open mind is requisite. There is need for positive knowledge, and knowledge is usually laboriously acquired.

I.—There must be an appreciation of the nature of the offence that is charged against the offender.

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Every taking is not larceny and every fantastic tale is not a false pretence. Embezzlement and obtaining credit by fraud have their distinctive and distinguishing features. And at times though a thing has been done, the absence of a *mens rea* or guilty mind may remove an essential factor that creates the offence. There is no virtue in recording a conviction, and a conviction should only be recorded when all the elements that constitute the offence were present. An immoral act need not be criminal, and contemptible behaviour need not merit the imposition of a fine or imprisonment. The duty of the magistrate is to watch the interest of the accused no less carefully than he watches the interests of the community ; he stands between the community and the citizen to see that the interests of both are conserved.

The circumstances under which an offence is committed are important. A blow may be struck in sudden passion and immediately repented of, or it may be the result of taunts and insults that make the person assaulted the real aggressor. A thing may be taken feloniously as a result of a sudden temptation or because of penury and starvation. The prisoner may be a tool in the hands of another who has escaped arrest. All these factors must be considered and due regard paid to the previous good character of the accused. It is the deliberate policy of the law to prevent men from becoming criminals, and if a man's antecedent history is good and there are mitigating circumstances surrounding the commission of his offence, the law provides for generous handling of the

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offender. The Probation of Offenders Act, 1907, says : " Where any person is charged before a Court of Summary Jurisdiction with an offence punishable by such Court, and the Court thinks that the charge is proved, but is of opinion that, having regard to the character, antecedents, age, health or mental condition of the person charged, or to the extenuating circumstances under which the offence was committed, it is not expedient to inflict any punishment or any other than a nominal punishment, or that it is expedient to release the offender on probation, the Court may *without proceeding to conviction* make an order either :
I.—dismissing the information or charge, or II.—discharging the offender on his entering into a recognizance with or without sureties to be of good behaviour and to appear for *conviction and sentence when called upon* at any time during such period, not exceeding three years, as may be specified in the order." The same Act makes similar provisions for prisoners who have been convicted on indictment at Quarter Sessions. The whole policy of criminal administration has been revolutionized, and the aim of the legislature is that, if possible, unhappy people who have slipped into crime should be helped to win back their lost reputation. There are occasions when it is impossible to put into operation the more generous impulses of the law, and this may arise either from the nature of the offences or the circumstances surrounding their commission. In the case of offences against children, offences that involve brutality, degradation, exploitation of women and girls, destroying morals

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for the purpose of gain, blackmail, and illicit trafficking in drugs, a first offender is not entitled to the benefit of the Probation of Offenders Act, unless there are facts that indicate the offender was being exploited by some principal.

It happens that a particular type of offence becomes more or less epidemic and a uniform acceptance of the principle of binding over the first offender will result in social demoralization. This finds illustration in the system of stealing from the docks, which became a post-war problem of no small dimensions. Looting became epidemic at all our chief ports and there was no public opinion against it amongst the dock-workers. In a lesser degree the same epidemic operated amongst railwaymen and transport-workers. In spite of long service, good character and unblemished past, magistrates throughout the country had to pass exemplary sentences. The same considerations apply to offences like stealing and receiving motor-cars, cycles, etc. Here again it often becomes imperative to deal severely with first offenders. The rewards of a successful coup are so large that it is a serious temptation to resist. The offender knows that his previous unblemished reputation will stand him in good stead, and it may be worth while to risk the odd chance, trusting his good character to secure him the benefit of the Probation of Offenders Act.

II.—The accused is innocent until he is convicted. The prisoner is at a disadvantage in standing in the dock at all. The whole environment and association are against him. The Bench should continually

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remind itself that the accused is in the dock merely because he must stand somewhere and the dock is the usual and convenient place. Guilty men have stood there, and so have innocent men, and the prisoner may be an innocent man. The accused is entitled to every courtesy and consideration that can be shown to a man in unhappy circumstances, he is entitled to every assistance in the presentation of his case, and to have every fact he alleges carefully weighed and considered. If he is remanded in custody the police should assist him in searching out any witnesses whom he may wish to call and in providing him with all the materials for his defence. It cannot be asserted too often that there is no virtue in securing a conviction unless the conviction is based on and warranted by the evidence, and the evidence should include everything that tells in the favour of a prisoner as well as everything that tells against him. The acceptance of this principle, that the accused is innocent until he is proved guilty, demands that, unless there are very strong reasons against it, the accused should be admitted to bail during the adjournments, and during the period that intervenes between his committal and his trial. The amount of bail can be fixed with a full regard to the nature of the charge and the probability of the prisoner's surrender at the adjournment or at his trial. And where a long period intervenes between the committal and Quarter Sessions or Assizes the question of bail becomes a matter of extreme urgency. It should be always remembered that "there is a presumption of innocence not only in

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criminal cases but in all cases where an allegation of criminality is made.”

III.—The accused can only be proved guilty by admissible evidence, and it is important to know what evidence is admissible. Evidence upon which men direct their ordinary daily affairs is often inadmissible to prove facts in law, for the law will accept nothing but the best evidence. Evidence may be given of only two sets of facts: (a) Facts that are in issue; that is, facts which are alleged by the prosecution and denied by the accused. (b) Facts which are relevant to the facts in issue. Relevant facts are those which are so closely related to the facts in issue that they render the latter probable or improbable. In other words, relevant facts are facts that throw some light on the facts in issue. For example, facts which supply a motive or indicate preparation or behaviour subsequent to the act alleged are all admissible because they show whether the act was done with a particular motive or with deliberation.

All facts which are part of the same transaction are relevant, so that where one fact is in issue all the other facts are admissible.

Where an act is relevant or in issue the words spoken in connection with such physical act are admissible, whether they are spoken by the doer of the act or by anyone present at the time.

Statements made after the transaction by the injured party are usually inadmissible except in cases of rape and such offences in relation to females, when the fact that a complaint is made, and the terms of

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the complaint, are admissible, not as evidence of the facts complained of, but as evidence of the consistency of the story told by the prosecutrix.

Conduct on occasions other than those to which the charge relates are usually irrelevant. The fact that a person has done certain things on other occasions is not relevant to the issue whether he has done it on the occasion in question. But where a person is charged with an offence involving guilty knowledge or intention evidence is admissible of previous acts to show his guilty knowledge or intention. And in order to show a systematic course of conduct, evidence of similar acts on subsequent occasions may be given.

A person should not be convicted on the uncorroborated evidence of an accomplice.

Direct evidence, that is, the evidence of one who has seen the facts, is generally required. Hearsay evidence, that is, evidence of facts which he does not know of his own knowledge but of which he has been told, is not generally admissible.

A confession made by a prisoner can be given in evidence against him, but the prosecution must show that it was voluntary and that no threat or inducement was offered. Any expression suggesting that it would be advantageous to tell the truth will render the confession inadmissible.

In trials for murder and manslaughter, and in these only, statements made by the deceased relating to the circumstances of his death are admissible, provided the prosecution prove that the deceased had at the

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one happens to be a teetotaler is no warrant for spite against a publican, and a penchant for a "little on a horse" is no justification for treating the Betting Acts as a joke. It has been known for magistrates to extend a large magnanimity to those acts which they themselves commit within the radius of the law. Impartiality, sound judgment, avoidance of every symptom of crankery and one-sidedness are the essentials to be aimed at. A justice of the peace can become a public absurdity long before a Lord Chancellor would intervene to put an end to his judicial functioning. The very greatness of our freedom should place strict limits on our exercise of it. Perhaps, after all, the highest we can aim at is the practice of an ancient and holy maxim to "do unto others as we would that others should do unto us."

VI.—Too serious a view should not be taken of minor indiscretions. The wisest of us are foolish sometimes, and folly need not merit the punishment or stigma of a misdemeanour. The price of a taxi-cab sometimes makes all the difference between getting home respectably and getting to the cells as a drunk and incapable. Noah was drunk on, at least, one occasion, and even Solomon was not always discreet. It may be that his "Book of Wisdom" was written out of experiences that would impinge on the statutes of a modern state.

If a conviction can be avoided it is preferable, but crime must be discouraged. It is for the Bench in all the circumstances to determine what admoni-

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tion, fine or imprisonment will discountenance the conduct that is complained of.

There is as much room for and as much need of "heart" on the Bench as in any other place in the world, and no magistrate can fulfil his important office who leaves behind him at his home those generous impulses that make up life's sanctities and delights. It may well be that the experiences of criminal courts have demonstrated that consideration and concern have won response where fines and imprisonment have failed. At all events the Legislature has recognized a place for generosity and magnanimity in dealing with offenders. A wise magistrate has said that the unobtrusive paternal "touch" is an ideal to be aimed at. Perhaps he is right. In no mere metaphorical sense the magistrate is the "father" of his people, and an unostentatious attitude of paternal understanding will not lose its reward. Scientific law has its place in the class-rooms at the Inns of Court and the Universities. Within the precincts of the Court the problems are red with the throbbing blood of reality, and a wrong decision is a tragedy. No place else in the world has more need of sympathetic understanding, pity, concern, and a fulness of forgiveness. "Familyhood" gives the clue to a sane administration of the Criminal Law. That does not mean sentimental emotionalism, nor does it involve cant. The subject of the former and the practitioner of the latter are utterly unfitted for the Bench, and sentimental enthusiasts reduce the Bench to ridicule.

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They use their position to race their hobby-horses and give vent to their obsession. That, surely, is the antithesis of a judicial temper. Parliament is the place for people with "views." The Bench of a court of justice is the place for the administration of the law as made or modified by Parliament.

So far as the law is concerned it is great in its magnanimity. If harshness is meted out to the unfortunate people in the dock, that is the handiwork of the judge or magistrate, and not of the Law. After a prisoner has pleaded or been found guilty, a magistrate's duty is not finished. The matter of punishment remains to be settled. What shall it be? The range of punishment is enormous and is measured by the distance from penal servitude at quarter sessions to discharge without conviction at petty sessions. For his offence the prisoner may be discharged, bound over in sureties to come up for judgment, fined, imprisoned, or sent to penal servitude and whipped. It is no light task to decide which punishment the prisoner should bear. Emotionalism may be one expression of an ill-balanced mind, but the absence of it is likely to be the expression of a blind and reckless cruelty. Lack of imagination, inability to visualize and weigh all the facts and circumstances that surround the commission of the offence may lead to terrible injustice. Misplaced generosity may hurt the community, misplaced severity may destroy the responses and moral reactions of a brother man. A week's remand often gives both the Bench and the prisoner the opportunity for a little reflection. Better

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remand than to strike blindly and without reflection. Not seldom a new point of view is found and a new relativity is discovered. It is an unhappy reflection that comes at times to the wisest when he sees later mitigating circumstances that were overlooked. Remands give prisoners an experience of prison and punishment that is salutary without involving the stigma of a conviction. He has been to jail, but he can leave it and return to his place on probation without carrying the jail-bird reputation. The dock is a place of heart-searchings, and men there come back to a revaluation of the simpler facts of life. The light that burns across men's hearts in jail reveals the fundamentals. There is a practical test by which to judge of punishment and penalties. Change places with the prisoner, and in the light of the actual circumstances do as you would be done by. Pass the sentence that in all the circumstances you would be prepared to accept without a feeling of injustice. This test has the advantage or the disadvantage of a religious association, but it is the test that avoids regrets both for the Bench and the dock.

Magnanimity, generosity, justice, though tempered with severity, stir emotions and breed resolves. Malignity and indifference breed hatred and revolt. Men can be turned into avowed enemies of society, but we are so constituted that a just judgment, though severe, meets with the approval of even those who are condemned.

Special care is needed with adolescents. Lads

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and girls live in a world that is not your world or mine. Theirs is a world of colour and romance, of dreams and ecstasies. Emotions thrill in and dominate the normal days. In such a world it is not hard to tamper with the laws that have been made by the older and wiser and disillusioned. Something, indeed much, must be conceded to Youth, for its time is a period of tempestuousness, and they have not the wisdom that time and pain bring. It is a dreadful thing to send a lad to prison for the first time, and it should be the last desperate act of despair. The utmost advantage should be taken of the probation officer. His supervision, friendship, co-operation in finding work and advice are invaluable as stabilizing factors. The results of the probation system in the Metropolitan area are such as to make one optimistic of success.

The Children's Court demands a large display of those sentiments and qualities that we exhibit to the frailties and follies near at home. And what appears as truculence at times may only be an exhibition in a public place of what we have seen in a nursery that is a shrine for us. Wherever work may lie for rude hands and rough minds, it does not lie within the precincts of a Children's Court. He, indeed, was a student of life who once advised us to see in the wayward girl our own daughter and in the foolish lad our own son. And in the little pilgrims whose misdeeds have brought them to the place of public punishment . . . Let us think of

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other little ones who might have changed places with these.

The Magisterial Bench offers in many ways a unique opportunity of distinguished social service. Though there are ways and means to punish those who deliberately pursue a career of crime, there are, too, ways and means of helping the needy and the poor, admonishing the wayward and the foolish, and establishing on a better way those who have fallen into evil paths. The law leaves us a free choice of the weapons we shall use, and it is fit and proper that those who sit upon the Bench should fulfil in an earnest spirit the honourable obligations that the community has entrusted to them.

CHAPTER IX

THE LIGHTS AND SHADOWS OF A CHILDREN'S COURT

THE Children's Court that tries juvenile offenders of East and North-East London sits at the Town Hall, Shoreditch. It has jurisdiction over the wide area comprised in the North London, Old Street and Thames Police Courts, and sweeps the most densely-populated districts of the Metropolis—Hoxton, Bethnal Green, Hackney, Whitechapel, Poplar and Stepney. The estimated population is about a million and a quarter, and the area is twenty square miles. The general conditions, economic, social and domestic, under which child life is begotten and nurtured is of the most deplorable character. The overcrowding is perhaps more pronounced than in any other area in the whole Metropolis, and the number of children per family stands in dramatic contrast to that of the residential and suburban quarters of London. We take a family of a dozen as normal, and fourteen or sixteen occasions no surprise. The life of a working woman with a dozen children linked on to her other domestic and marital obligations is not a sinecure, and it is apt to become one of terrible and unceasing drudgery. These conditions, coupled with inter-

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mittent unemployment and the anxieties occasioned by bad health or overcrowding, react on the mental and physical well-being of the woman. I can imagine no harder life than that endured by a very large number of women. Their patience is phenomenal, but I sometimes think that it is the patience of despair. Obviously all these conditions affect the lives of the children. There is little opportunity for those intimate and happy associations that so often discipline but remove the harshness from obedience. There is more difficulty in shielding children from too early an acquaintanceship with phases of life that are undesirable. On all sides they see the dissipations of drink and lust and uncontrolled passions. The public-house garish and gaudy is a watch-tower at every street corner. A drunken man is almost a normal man, and a drunken woman is a joke. Gambling is very prevalent, and the early editions of the evening papers are shouted down every back street in the middle of the morning.

The places of recreation are the streets, and the police have a habit of interfering with the games. Playing football may mean a fine of seven-and-six, and half-crowns do not lie about the gutterways of East London. Pitch-and-toss appeals to the lads who have left school and started work. A lot of excitement can be bought at a halfpenny a time. But, again, the police authorities seem to have conspired to rob life of all colour and gaiety.

Look at this !

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“Every person who shall fly any kite or play at any game to the annoyance of the inhabitants or passengers or who shall make or use any slide upon ice or snow in any street or other thoroughfare to the common danger of passengers . . .

“And it shall be lawful for any constable belonging to the Metropolitan Police Force to take into custody, without warrant, any person who shall commit any such offence within view of any such constable.”

Both summer and winter are robbed of their delights by an Act passed in 2 and 3 Victoria, Chapter 47.

In spite of the social conditions and restrictive statutes, the amount of juvenile offences is small and the nature of the offences is relatively trivial. One afternoon a week suffices to clear the calendar of the juvenile offenders of a twenty-square-mile radius with a population of a million and a quarter. And the criminals! Two lads of ten were greatly attracted by the leisurely work of the postman. They got a sack, and after the postman had done his round of delivering letters, they went over his beat and two pair of small hands abstracted the letters out of the letter-boxes. In the course of this exciting adventure they were caught and charged at the Children's Court. They were sent to the Remand Home for a week, and during their sojourn there they were visited by one of the lady probation officers. She tried to find out the cause of the offence, and the lads explained that they were collecting them so that they could put them into the big red pillar at the corner. The lady

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remonstrated with them on the heinousness of their conduct, but the young philosopher expressed the view that a fuss was being made out of a trifle. The lady enlarged upon their behaviour, and the philosopher replied : " Then, will there be queues of people at the trial like at Mrs. Thompson's ? "

It is astonishing how lax some parents are in guiding and controlling their children. Lads and girls of ten and twelve go and come as they like, and it is no uncommon complaint on the part of parents that these children won't come home till midnight.

And the ambition of some parents is to get rid of the children during the troublesome age by charging them with being beyond control and sending them to Industrial Schools. When the children become of employable age the parents develop an intense interest in them. Having neglected the children in childhood they desire to exploit them in adolescence. This has the advantage of cheapness. One woman laid an information against her son aged eight. The lad's head barely reached to the table of the Court. The complaint was that he was disobedient and stayed out till midnight. She was unable to control him, and had another child at an Industrial School. It was suggested that she would be expected to contribute a substantial weekly amount for the support of the lad, and she offered 2s. 6d. per week towards the maintenance cost, 23s. 6d. She was earning £4-£5 per week, and besides her " unofficial " husband was in full work. The offer was refused, and it was

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indicated that, in the circumstances, something much nearer the total cost was expected.

The lady was indignant and expressed the view that she could keep him on half a crown. The charge alleged against the child fell into a secondary place, and his welfare was of secondary concern.

So the Children's Court is the clearing-house of the domestic and social delinquents. Some offences are merely the outcome of adventures the full significance of which was never considered. Others are an expression of parental unfitness and unconcern.

But the prevailing note in the Children's Court is one of intense sympathy with childhood and an earnest endeavour to save them from embarking upon a career of lawlessness and crime.

The modern and beneficent trend of criminal judicature is perhaps seen at its best in the children's courts. Subject to two presumptions, children are amenable to the ordinary jurisdiction and penalties of the Criminal Law, and in days not so long ago little was done to soften its harsher aspects to the inexperience and foolishness of childhood.

A child under seven is presumed to be incapable of committing a crime, and a child over seven and under fourteen is presumed to be innocent until the presumption is rebutted by strong and definite evidence that he is of a mischievous disposition. *Malitia supplet aetatem.*

Our ancestors put into operation the Criminal

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Law with logical and unemotional precision. At Abingdon Assizes, in 1629, a boy named Dean, about eight years old, was convicted of setting fire to some barns near Windsor. Evidence was given that he had malice towards the owner of the buildings, and the lad was sentenced to death and executed. The malice of a child of eight years old reaped a terrible atonement.

In 1816 a Committee was appointed to inquire into the state of the Metropolis and the police. The verbatim report of that inquiry indicates the terrible neglect of the child delinquent and the popular indifference to his fate. They were herded at Newgate and New Prison, Clerkenwell, without regard to age or sex, and they consorted with the dregs of Metropolitan criminals. There grew up gradually an appreciation of the worth of the nation's child-life, and an attempt to salvage the delinquent.

The punishment of children (a child is a person under the age of fourteen) and young persons (a young person is one over fourteen and under sixteen) is now regulated by the Children Act, 1908.

The provisions of the statute are indicative of the development of a moral sensitiveness and responsibility in relation to youth. Sentence of death shall not be pronounced on or recorded against any child or young person, but in lieu thereof the Court shall sentence the child or young person to be detained during His Majesty's pleasure, under such conditions as the Secretary of State may decide, and whilst so detained the offender shall be deemed to be in legal custody.

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No child or young person shall be sentenced to imprisonment for any offence, but both a child and a young person may be sentenced to be detained, in the case of his having been convicted of an attempt to commit murder, or of manslaughter, or of wounding with intent to do grievous bodily harm, for such period as may be specified in the sentence; and in the case of offences for which adults are punishable with penal servitude or imprisonment may be committed to custody in a place of detention provided under the statute and named in the order for such term as is specified, and in no case exceeding one month.

The special courts for the trial of children and young persons are usually held in municipal buildings or church vestries. They are never held within the precincts of the ordinary police courts.

The dominating idea is that the charges should be heard and determined away from the courts that are usually associated with crime and criminals. Every association of criminal administration is removed, and even the uniform of the police is anathema.

In order to complete the divorcement of children's courts from the ordinary police court the constitution of the Bench is altered; and whereas Metropolitan magistrates and stipendiaries sit alone to try adult delinquents, in the children's court they have a lady and a gentleman, lay justices, as colleagues who take a full share in the trial of the accused. At no point are the children brought into contact with the usual criminal machinery.

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When remanded in custody, and this is often done to give them a week's reflection, even if it is decided to put them on probation, they are taken to special remand homes. There are no cells, no warders, no uniform, no punitive food and raiment. They are perhaps better tended and better fed than is their normal experience.

During the remand the most careful inquiry is made into the whole circumstances of their lives. A report is made giving complete details of age, health, education, disposition, habits, domestic environment and parents' position. It is an attempt to diagnose in detail the whole circumstances of the offenders' lives.

Besides, the parents are requested to attend the court, and they are entitled to be heard. The Press is represented. Probation officers and school attendance officers are present. The underlying operative ideal is to avoid, if possible, any disturbance of the family life. Normally the best environment in which children can develop is the environment of home, with its attachments and obligations. Unless the circumstances are exceptional, the offender is put on probation under the care of an experienced probation officer, usually a lady, and he is periodically visited and advised and assisted.

The lads are encouraged to join the Scouts or other such movement, and not seldom they are helped to buy the uniform that makes such strong appeal to the youthful imagination.

The major part of the crime in children's courts

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is the result of a spirit of adventure or of a moment's thoughtlessness. Of serious offenders there are few. Lads are gregarious, and even in their early teens "men" aim at being captains and leaders. Ambition bites the hearts of lads at street corners as well as men near by the Royal Exchange or in the back benches of the House of Commons.

Even apostles of a better ordered world are not immune from the lust of leadership.

And in adventurous hours the challenge, "I dare you to knock the Cupid off the fountain," or "I dare you to break into the warehouse," is not lightly turned aside. And lads aim at mastery and fame in their little world; but sometimes, instead of fame, they find sorrow and disgrace.

A lad's world is as real as yours and mine. A world of problems and perplexities, of challenges to audacity and faith, of elations and despondency. That world has its public opinion as definite, as appealing, and as important as any other world; and the inhabitants of that world, in quest of its prizes, sometimes do things that they should have left undone.

And so in a children's court we have the denizens of the world that we used to know, a world abutting on our world, but not of it; a world with its own codes of honour, its own temptations, its own chivalries and shames and sorrows.

The children's court has rightly no association with the criminal courts of adults. It is the jurisdiction

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of a world as far removed from adults as is Mars or the moon.

The clue to its efficacy and efficiency lies in an understanding heart, and perhaps that is best got either in one's own nursery or, if, unhappily, that is not possible, in the recollections of one's own residence in the kingdom of youth.

The situation is often full of glorious humour. The incidents are ludicrous, rollicking in their boyishness. But one must repress that attitude of mind. A quiet seriousness is the spirit that begets a serious response, and when the day's work is done the laughter that one cannot repress is sometimes very near akin to tears at the comedy and tragedy of life.

It is seldom that one meets a liar or a coward.

There is something splendidly British in those little lads gathered out of the back streets and alleys of Bethnal Green, Holloway, and Poplar. Some are tearful, but most of them fight back the tears and prepare themselves to face any issue rather than raise the white flag.

They acknowledge their guilt, and if invited to express their present mood they will confess their regret. But that expression of regret is given only in response to a question. They never volunteer their repentance. Truculence is seldom seen, and what seems truculence may be misunderstood. But when it is unmistakable, a week's remand to Brixton has a subduing effect.

One lad made frequent appearances at one of the children's courts. He was a big, overgrown fellow

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of fifteen, and in experience, appearance, and knowledge of the world could hold his own with older men. He discovered very early that there is a strong reluctance against sending lads to prison on remand, and he took advantage of the sentiment.

His offence was persistently obstructing the highway with his coster's barrow. He was charged again and again, and openly avowed his intentions of doing what he liked. On the last occasion when he was charged it was pointed out to him that he was becoming a nuisance, and he was asked whether he would promise not to offend again. In the most insolent manner he informed the Court that he might or he might not.

The time had come to teach this truculent young Hebrew that there was a possibility of mistaking consideration for weakness. He was remanded a week, and this time he was sent to Brixton Prison.

It was a very much sobered youth that made his appearance at the court the following week. All the challenge had gone out of his eyes, and he was more than ready to give a solemn undertaking not to offend again, which undertaking he has faithfully observed. I have little doubt that a prolongation of consideration towards this lad would have resulted in confirming him in his challenging attitude to the laws, and in time might have ended in the creation of a criminal disposition.

Politicians affirm, or, rather, some time ago affirmed, their determination to make the world safe for democracy. Social workers might adopt as their

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programme a policy to make parents fit for children.

It is an extraordinary revelation how utterly unfit many parents are for parenthood. They appear unable either to control or to win the respect and affection of their children. A cuff on the ear or a muttered curse is their only conception of parental control. The children are set adrift as soon as their legs will carry them, and they are abandoned to the chance fortune of such companionship or amusements as the streets afford.

It is the fashion to denounce housing conditions and overcrowded areas, and such denunciation is not without justification. But better housing conditions and slum clearances will effect but little.

There is something both comic and tragic in parents bringing children of four and six years old and complaining to the Court that they are beyond control. Their complaint is a confession of complete unfitness for the responsibilities of parenthood. Of its privileges and joys they are utterly unaware.

Too many children are the unwanted sequelæ of conjugal life, a burden and a nuisance. Often the complaint is an attempt to dispose of the children by getting them sent away to industrial schools, and the circumstances disclose the shadows that gather about the days of childhood that should be joyous and full of affection.

There is nearly always the stepmother. Even in her own motherhood and offspring there is no answering response to the little bit of flotsam that

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was left in life's sea by another woman who went away from that very home down the way of death.

It is a very pitiful spectacle, because the most generous consideration towards the child is only sending him back to the frozen home and the frozen heart of her whom he calls mother.

At times there are charges against children that make the problems of life very mixed and puzzling. Something has been done that infringes the law and which the law calls larceny, but the motive that impelled to it was something that bore the superscription of chivalry and generosity.

The little lad stole wood or fittings from an empty house, or lifted groceries from the stall on the roadway. He is caught and charged. His little pale face and wildly beating heart are a study in terror. He is almost mesmerized by the experience as he stands by the side of the table.

And the story is told—a story of poverty and hunger. The lad stole to bring a little warmth and food to his mother.

One can see the puzzling problems that trouble him. Life is so confused and mixed. He meant to do a decent thing, but he is standing in the dock.

The parents are usually present, and there are at times poignant scenes. A weeping mother breaks down the heroic resolve of some lad who swore to himself that he would face the music. He strives

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hard, side by side with his companions, to make the brave show. What a fight he is making! But that is his mother weeping. Is it memory—some recollection of a kiss or a tender touch? Very soon he is weeping very quietly. He could have faced anything and dared anything, but he cannot face his mother's sorrow.

A widow fighting hard for her foothold, and all the burden of the children on her back. Ex-soldiers with ribbons on their waistcoats, the heroes and the welcomed of just a year or two ago. Infirm men who have lost health and occupation in the world's warfare. Able-bodied dole-seekers, the idle and the unemployable. A parade of those who have taken the responsibilities of parenthood.

And the children have brought them to the Court. Some are overwhelmed with the disgrace. Others are indifferent to life, or Fate, or God. This is one more blow, and one more makes no difference. They are anæsthetized. They have lost the capacity to weep or suffer.

In this mighty world of childhood that abuts on ours, all the problems and perplexities of life thrill and throb. Children fighting their battles, facing their temptations, weaving character out of the day's lessons and relaxations. Children hiding their sorrows as we hide ours from the gaze of an unsympathetic world, dreaming their dreams, nourishing their grey days with promises of sunny days to come. And at night mother nature hushes them to rest and dreams. And the children that passed by the table at the

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children's court are, maybe, very like yours and mine who are wrapt in peaceful slumbers.

It may even be that those little hands lying across white coverlets did evil things. But somehow we did not call them felonies, and in teaching them obedience to the laws it was not needful for us to call in the aid of the police and the children's court.

At times there are little prisoners whose lives present a startling illustration of the old and terrible curse: "I will visit the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me."

There they stand with the disloyalties and sins of their fathers and grandfathers and great-grandfathers. The ghastly procession of things done in secret parades in public, and this or that innocent suffers for the sins of the guilty. There is no escape, no deliverance, no atonement. Nothing can purge his blood, nothing can whiten his flesh, nothing can cleanse the texture of his mind. Nothing can break the relentless chain of fate. It is a life damned without volition and without misdeed. I envy the men who can accept the easy doctrine of free-will and the successful men who can glory in their achievement. They are spared much of the anguish of life.

A little lad of fourteen was charged with cruelty to a cat. He had enticed the animal with caresses and covered her with petrol and set her on fire. The cat was burnt to death and the sufferings of the blazing animal gave the lad some secret, inexplicable

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delight. This was the last of a series of terrible cruelty to animals, all of which had been devised and carried out with a devilish cunning. There he stood at fourteen a dreadful spectacle of human depravity. His head was set upon haunched shoulders and he had little bony arms and hands, and beady eyes looked at you out of a little yellow face. He was examined by the doctor, and they call his type by a dreadful name.

Washed up by the tides of London was this ghastly, emaciated, distorted remnant of boyhood. Tortured in mind and in body by some compelling lust of cruelty for whose possession he shared no responsibility. It was a grim inheritance. And as they took him away to a place of discipline and safety he sent a wail of grief across the Court. It smote the heart with the terrible inevitableness of things. And an innocent lad was literally bearing in his frail body something of the sins of the world. Till my eyes are blind with the mists of death I cannot forget his going out of the quiet Court by Shoreditch. Men may jibe at sin, but that little lad was a spectacle more dramatic than the Cross at Calvary of the terribleness of the ways of sin.

This was Calvary in London. The Crucifixion lasted longer than the setting of the sun, and there was no resurrection on the third day.

CHAPTER X

THE HUMOUR AND PATHOS OF A POLICE COURT

A LONDON police Court sees many manifestations of the human spirit. To it some come voluntarily in order to find there the solution of their problems and vexations; others are brought to it, involuntarily, as to a place of atonement for their follies and transgressions. There is about the Court always an atmosphere of humanity and reality. There is something about it, too, that is intimate and intense; for, to come at all is the confession of a great compulsion induced either by a personal distraction or by the strong arm of the Criminal Law. The impressive fact is that, in spite of every theory of corporate life and the oneness of the race, mankind is strangely isolated, and each man bears his own burden, faces his own temptation, and suffers in his mind and body his own punishment.

A police Court is always a place of crisis. Some unusual happening has brought the man or woman there. The normalities have, for the moment, ceased to operate. And the man or woman is a stranger in a strange environment, with strange people and noises and smells and language. Everything is differ-

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ent, unusual, strained. The soul becomes aware of its individuality. The adventitious aids of conventions, normal reactions, familiar forms of speech cease to operate, and the mind makes a supreme endeavour to adapt itself to an undreamt-of world.

It is in the dock that some men first become conscious of their distinctive personality, and they make strenuous efforts to give expression to its particular qualities. It is no wonder that in this nascent state words are spoken, imagery is used, points of view are expressed that thrill with the purest humour and with the most poignant sorrow.

The dock of a London police Court is a great confessional, and to the Magistrate is given the priestly office of granting or refusing Absolution. The careful and experienced psychologist can find clues that give a very accurate revelation of the heart and mind of the offender. The twisted words, the tortured sentence, the mixed metaphors, the confused ideas all have a significance and suggestiveness, and the presentation of a defence crowded with irrelevancies, trivialities, and absurd deductions that raise the laughter of the onlookers may be baptized with the baptism of anguish.

A woman was charged with "Drunk and Disorderly," and the offence was committed on the first day of her discharge from prison after a month at Holloway for the same offence. She pleaded guilty, and when asked what she had to say about the matter, she replied: "I only came out yesterday morning, and my friends were celebrating my return. You know, sir, that

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happened to the Prodigal Son," and the gleam of a smile went across her weary face and her eyes lit up with merriment. Of course there was laughter in Court. Here was a woman who could joke about her own disgrace and laugh at the drabness of the prison-cell. So it seemed. Here was a spectacle of servitude to drink, and somehow one felt there were depths of strength and goodness somewhere.

Then came her record. Conviction on conviction stretching back for twenty years, and she was only thirty-five. It needed little imagination to visualize the intensity of suffering that must have been crowded into those twenty years. The physical reaction from drink, the shame of the earlier convictions, the regrets and remorse of lost years.

She was asked, "What is to be done?" She was left to decide her own punishment or to decree her own redemption. A few words of sympathy and pity, and there followed the revelation of the true woman. The laughing woman who submitted the Scriptural parallel was only a mask. Her life had its remorse and its regrets, but the crowded highways of East London offer a poor chance for the reclamation of a frail woman with a lost character. She knew better than we who judged her the madness and folly and shame, and she beat her head with her hands in the anguish of her despair.

In a moment the Court had passed from laughter to sorrow. Here was tragedy where we expected comedy. Here was Golgotha. Here was Mary Magdalene unredeemed.

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The tide of the traffic rumbled in the distance and the hoot of steamers reached us from the near-by river. A great world was busy with its affairs of commerce and money and games and gaiety, for the Thames stretched away in leisured miles to the green banks by Shepperton and Windsor, but in a troubled world a lonely woman had lost her way and in drink she tried to drown her despair. Drink gave her the surcease and exhilaration and joy that others find in books and friendship and travel. And she went to jail.

For some prisoners the dock has little terror though they are far from being habitual offenders, and there are exhibitions, at times, of rare bravery amounting almost to audacity. No place makes a larger demand on courage and self-possession. The raised platform in the centre of the Court puts a man in the limelight, and the Press is there to proclaim his misdeeds and follies to the world. There are little scenes of sorrow, and cries of despair ring across the Court, but these are usually from the women-folk who, in spite of laws, hold in great affection the prisoner in the dock. It is these occurrences that put courage to the test, and prisoners strive hard to hide their responding emotions.

Others can transpose the whole proceedings into an occasion for humour. It is perhaps an expression of the philosophy that results from familiarity with vicissitudes, disappointments, hardships. It is the imagination that creates the terrors of life. The

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actual is less terrifying than the anticipated, and when one is there—well! he is there!!

A prisoner appeared in the dock on a charge of stealing at the docks. As he was leaving one evening he was searched and there was found on him an eight-ounce medicine-bottle filled with whisky. He had been engaged in unloading a whisky cargo, and he was arrested and charged. The evidence appeared conclusive, the more so inasmuch as he cross-examined none of the witnesses for the prosecution. He pleaded Not Guilty, but his defence was one that put a heavy strain on human credulity, and he did not hesitate to appeal to the miraculous. Here was his story, his defence :

“As I was going home to my dinner I met my wife. She had been to the doctor for some medicine. As she had more shopping to do, she asked me to take the medicine home and I put it in my pocket. I forgot to leave the bottle and went back to work. I hung up my coat on the ship that was discharging whisky, the medicine was in my pocket and it was there when I got my coat to go home. I was stopped at the gate and the bottle was found in my pocket, but *in some way* the medicine had changed to whisky.” He was reminded that there was only one recorded authoritative case of such an occurrence and it was usually regarded as a miracle. The prisoner was not in the least perturbed and he propounded this question in reply: “If it happened once, why couldn’t it happen twice?”

The answer was two months!

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Another defence involving the miraculous was put forward by a railway lorry-man. He was charged with stealing two capons, the property of his employers, the Railway Company.

The evidence of the prosecution was not challenged and it appeared conclusive.

The prisoner was seen working about the nose-bag at the back of his van and taking it to the footboard at the front. His movements gave rise to suspicion, and an inquisitive police officer searched the nose-bag and found in it the two capons, the subject of the charge.

In the Railway Yard there were several crates of capons ready for delivery, and these crates were in the neighbourhood of the nose-bag and the prisoner. The charge was indignantly denied, though the finding of the capons in the nose-bag was admitted, and the only issue was how the capons got into the nose-bag. The prisoner put up this explanation. "There were some few oats in the nose-bag ; maybe the birds smelt them !" The vanman forgot for the moment that dead birds neither smell nor eat oats, and it is unusual for dead birds to break open crates even in search of freedom.

One prisoner was charged with extensive frauds involving thousands of pounds and ranging over several counties. He had advertised extensively in the county newspapers as a salesman of agricultural produce, set up two lines of telephones and registered a telegraphic address. He created all the appearances

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of an extensive and prosperous business. Hay, straw, oats, eggs, butter and fowls came to him in large consignments and he disposed of the stocks at knock-out prices. When his clients began to press him, he went off with the money. A warrant was issued, he was arrested, sent for trial and ultimately sent to penal servitude. He took the whole situation with the utmost sang-froid and delighted in indicating that he was at least honest enough in the registration of the telegraphic address "Straw." "Shure! I was a man of straw all the toime, and didn't I make it clear enough?"

His life had been one of adventure, and in quest of it he turned aside from a holy avocation. He had been destined for the priesthood and had entered upon his preparatory course, which he pursued for a brief period, but classics and philosophy lacked appeal, and he turned aside and found adventures that ended more than once in penal servitude.

During the South African War he was serving a term, and his release was simultaneous with the end of the war. He decided to pay a visit to his parents in the little Irish town where he was born, and he returned in the guise of a soldier who had won distinction. He showed the medals that his valour had won and he was fêted by the local municipality. He attributed his long silence and his long absence to the demands that patriotism makes upon the faithful.

In art of deception and fraud he found an enduring delight, and he had no sense of wrong-doing. He was

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impudent and imperturbable, and life was a solemn farce in which he was destined to play his part.

There was one curious touch that added the only element of pathos to his new adventure. During his brief sojourn in the town of his latest frauds, he had formed a friendship with a barmaid and she gave him a very devoted affection. She stood by him to the end, in spite of his full disclosure of the antecedents. He pledged his word and she pledged hers that at the end of the sentence they would begin life afresh, and he went away for seven years.

One wonders whether he in his solitude kept alive the fire of his love and whether she in the freedom and vicissitudes of her environment was true to the convict. The last time I saw her she was waiting by the prison-gate for the last farewell before he went to Portland.

It is a curious law of life that the most poignant suffering that we bear is because of the suffering we cause to others for whom we have affection. It would not be very hard to bear disappointment, loss of freedom and disgrace were it not that others will bear a suffering more grievous than ourselves.

Vicarious suffering is the most cruel. A prisoner went into the dock on a charge of extensive frauds. There were several men engaged in it, but he was the only one arrested.

It was one of those cases that need the most careful linking-up of the evidence, for a missing link means an acquittal. There were missing links in the evidence, but he was indifferent and he made a full confession,

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though he would not disclose the identity of his confederates. He was not anxious about his fate. Jail had no terrors for him and the future was no concern. He was detached from life—so it seemed. But there rose and fell the quiet sobbing of a woman in the back of the Court. No display, no hysterics, no loss of self-control. It was a woman crying quietly to herself because of the greatness of her grief. It was the man's mother, and by her stood a little grey-haired neighbour who put her arms about the weeping woman. Ah! there was the punishment that the man in the dock was bearing. He was remanded, but he paid no heed to this proceeding; and more than once he interrupted the Court by his incessant appeal, "Won't you let me speak to my mother?"

Perhaps the possibility of such a scene has deterred not a few of us from embarking upon adventures that might have held for one the seeds of sorrow and dismay.

In the police Court one comes to understand the paradoxical attitude of the Scriptures towards strong drink. Solomon assures us that "Wine is a mocker, strong drink is raging and whosoever is deceived thereby is a fool," and he warns us that it stingeth like an adder and biteth like a serpent. Other passages appear to justify the motto of the Worshipful Company of Vintners, "*Vinum exhilarat animum.*" We frequently see both the exhilaration and the sequelæ of the exhilaration. I used to think that the metaphor "blind drunk" was an exaggeration, though I was prepared for some optical disturbance by reason of

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an experience on Circuit. After an arduous day at Assizes in a Northern city, a few of us went after mess to a local music-hall. A famous comedian was entertaining the public for reward. One of our company sat silent for a considerable period, and tentatively he inquired of me, as he looked at his programme, what turn was on. I gave him the number of the turn. He looked at the programme and then at the comedian. A period of doubt and hesitancy supervened, and my friend inquired again what the number was. I gave him the correct number a second time. For a moment he appeared incredulous and asked me if I were sure, and I reassured him of the accuracy of the information. Doubting no more, he replied: "This is a most curious phenomenon. I could have sworn there were two." Perhaps he was *in via media* towards blindness! In the morning he alluded to the occurrence and expressed the view that he believed the salmon that he ate the night before had disagreed with him because it had set up functional disturbances. Obviously something had, but although I am in intimate association with the Port of London and the sea, no seaman has yet, in the multiplicity of possible defences, made so definite an allegation against fish. The more usual explanations implicate drugs or the quality of the drink taken, though occasionally charladies and widows who wait upon expectant mothers lay the blame upon their physical infirmities. Asthma and defective breathing are prolific causes of intoxication. Toothache, too, has its share of blame, and the fear of influenza

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impels the cautious to intimate relations with rum in order to prevent the attack.

The late World War is often associated with intoxication. The casual meeting of an old friend and the celebration of renewed friendships that were formed in France and Gallipoli are a fruitful source of jollity to the point of disorderly behaviour. And in the excitement of the resurrected memories men grow valorous again and assure and reassure the police with much fervour that the policeman's happy lot is entirely due to the soldier's sacrifice in France. Sometimes the valorous duties never necessitated his absence from the United Kingdom. One once assured me that though he was in England, he had always been with the combatants in spirit. I believed him without reluctance or hesitation.

Irishmen in drink easily relapse into politics. Politics were, until recently, the national sport of Ireland. One Irishman ruefully foresaw what any Irish Settlement would mean, and he inquired "What the —— English proposed to put in their place; Ireland won't be worth living in." One frequenter of a police Court when in drink begins the trouble that leads to his arrest by adjectival comparisons between the two people—naturally to the disadvantage of the English. In the morning he alleges either a misunderstanding or defective hearing to the police officer who arrested him. "Sorr! as ye are aware, there was the big foight last night and I said that I was hopting that the Englishman wud win. You know, sorr, we're a foighting race ourselves and we

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loike the best man to win. The officer must have misheard my worrds. I am shure he was too busy wid his duties to listen to my talk. Sorr, I'm a peace-loving man and I wud annoy nobody, much less a police officer. I am very friendly wid them all."

The Bench asks him whether he said so and so—specifying parts of the allegations against him.

The prisoner grows violently indignant. "Och, yer Worship, shure that's all d—— nonsense. I beg your honner's pardon, but that is all nonsense. I wudn't talk the loikes of that at all. No! my lord, the constable misheard my worrds. It is all a misunderstanding."

This gentleman appeared in Court during the period of the negotiations for the Irish Peace, and he was voluble in his optimism. Indeed, he manifested a larger interest in the treaty than in his own misdemeanour.

A few days after the arrest of de Valera he was taken into custody on the Whitechapel Road. He was drunk and demanding the release of Mr. de Valera forthwith.

He pleaded guilty to the charge of being drunk and disorderly, but he said he remembered nothing of the incident. When he was reminded of his former attitude towards the treaty he replied in a tone that carried reproof and indicated finality in the discussion: "Mr. Cairns, I'll tell ye, I make it a point niver to discuss politics wid me friends!"

It requires little discrimination to see that all the show of indignation is a pretence and that the

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prisoner is a play-boy of the Western World. At his next appearance a defence very close in kinsmanship to the present will be submitted for the consideration of the Court, and nobody knows better than the prisoner that the Bench is aware of the fictitious character of his moral indignation. And perhaps the Bench would be less than human that did not make a small concession to so fine a display of the *argumentum ad hominem* and to such artistry in the evasion of a simple issue. The prisoner has arrived at the lofty altitude of appreciating art for art's sake, and the finest of the arts is the art of lying artistically.

The varying aspects of matrimony find expression in the police Court, and whilst it is true that there are occasional elements of the tragic, the more common aspects are those which have made marriage a subject for the world's merriment. The shadow of the mother-in-law seldom lifts from the average Court, and the masterful wife is an ever-present trouble. At times one comes to accept as a mere exaggeration the dictum of the cynic: "The longer I live the more I wonder at the long-suffering of men." A lady confessed in a London Court the other day that she had no trouble whatever with her husband: "I just put him to bed before I go out and he is as good as anything until I come back." A husband like that must be a priceless treasure.

Perhaps all this is merely one expression of the large-heartedness of the female of the species, but in many areas men find it difficult to appreciate the virtue

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of the situation and rather than endure it they leave home.

Domestic differences are seldom settled in the solitude of the home or in a postponement of the problem. The wife, and occasionally the husband, bring the problem to the magistrate, and not seldom she announces the time and place to the neighbours in order to secure a good gallery. There is not much use in a denunciation *in camera*. A favourite preliminary is to intimate to the Bench that she had informed her husband of her intention to invoke the magisterial assistance, and she gives some illustrations of his expressions of vituperative contempt for the Bench in general and for the sitting magistrate in particular. Such behaviour, obviously, ought to create an unfavourable atmosphere for the erring spouse. If the magistrate has any little limitations, physical or otherwise, these are attached in order to demonstrate the *mala-fides* of the defendant.

Disrespect to the Metropolitan Bench necessarily involves disrespect to marital obligations.

One wife laid an information against her husband for arrears under a maintenance order. The man was out of work drifting from one common lodging-house to another. The wife was childless and in regular employment at good wages. The husband made it clear to the Court that, whilst it was true that he owed the money under the order, he was utterly without means and unable to pay. The only issue was whether, in the circumstances, he should be committed to prison. The Bench, viewing all the equities

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of the case, decided to adjourn it for some weeks to see if he could make some offer in the interval. This was too much for the indignant wife, and she got her own back on the Bench by proclaiming to the world her opinion of it, though she ascribed the opinion to her husband, for whom the Bench had shown such concern. "He told me you would do that, for he said he knew the b—— fool that sits on Saturdays, and he would celebrate the day by getting —— drunk." On the merits I think she was justified in feeling that she had won the day. The public pronouncement of her personal views of the magistrate was a richer reward than any payment of arrears under an order of the Court.

The husband, impelled, doubtless, by that sympathy that makes the whole world kin, said in tones of gentleness and pity: "Sir! that's what I had to live with. Do you wonder that I ran away?"

The disillusionment of the youthful husband or wife has elements of both humour and pathos, and the mutual recriminations are a demonstration of the very fragile threads out of which romance is woven.

Eight weeks or so are enough to tear and tangle those golden threads, and the fires of the devastating passion are damped down. Love changes to a temporary hate, and the endearing pledges of a few short weeks ago are hurled as taunts before the gaze of the public. Time and experience will, no doubt, bring them together again, but the disillusionment is bitter.

Much of all this could have been spared to both the lad and the girl by wise and timely counsel, though

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no counsel would have deterred either from the great adventure; but it would have prepared them for the to-morrow that Fate decrees must follow the perfect day. Not a few brides come to marriage as to the gateway of perfect freedom. They have now their own home and husband, and they resolutely dominate both. They treat the young husband with the same nonchalance that they saw at home meted out to an older and more sophisticated man. The younger husband has, maybe, not learnt wisdom, and he sometimes resorts to force to give expression to his surprise and disappointment. A young matron of some eight weeks' standing issued a summons for a separation order. The circumstances were such that she regarded the case as very simple and very reasonable. The husband returned from work one day and found her absent. She had gone to her mother's. The man was an illustration of the wisdom of an old if somewhat derogatory dictum, "Feed the brute!" He had been at heavy work for a long day, and, curiously enough, after a long wait for his bride and his food, the bridal paraphernalia of the young spouse did not appease the pangs of hunger. It is surprising the mistakes that nature makes. He was disagreeable and she smiled ironically. He urged more haste, she more deliberately slowed down. "I kept smiling, but I really don't know why," she told the Court. It was suggested to her that it was perhaps done to taunt him, and the young matron smiled again at the recollection of her success. She was advised to reflect on the position and make things up.

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This she refused to do, and she added as overwhelming evidence of the husband's unsuitability to a wife of twenty-one, "And he doesn't give me all his wages either!"

The youthful husband had his views of the marital obligations. He was asked how long he had courted her and he replied two years. It was pointed out that he had held her and won her against the world, and he was advised to court her again and he would probably get the same response. He was incredulous at the suggestion. "What! Court my own wife. I never heard of such a thing. She belongs to me." The work of the feminist movement seems incomplete, and there is still room for a great propaganda.

Men frequently complain of their wives' neglect of their personal appearance. Even in the back-streets of East London a husband appreciates charm in his own wife, and he takes slovenliness as an expression of indifference to himself. Perhaps he is right. It is curious the care that some women take to make preparations for the advent of a stranger. The good esteem of an utter stranger is of more worth than the appreciation of a husband. It would perhaps be well if the legal and ecclesiastical doctrine of the oneness of husband and wife were less literally accepted. Familiarity means the disruption of marriage. All these intimate things are freely submitted to the police Courts, but it is unwise to allow their frank discussion until there is no other way out. A police Court is a public place and there is no such malicious delight as the hearing of the domestic

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limitations of those for whom you have a great dislike. What little things rankle and chafe and hurt ! How very easily the raw places could be avoided ! What an altered world could be effected by just a little forbearance and toleration and patience !

At times there come revelations into the tortured martyrdom of some women's lives. Their patience is almost divine in its endurance and forgiveness. A crippled girl hurried from her squalid home to the police office. When the police arrived they found a drunken husband dragging from her bed a woman who had passed through the shadows of child-birth a week before. During the week of convalescence, night and day, she had been subjected to his tortures. Her child had been born dead with its neck and both arms broken. It was alleged that this calamity was the result of ante-natal cruelty.

There are abysmal depths of human degradation to which men can fall, responsive to no chivalry, honour, pity, and it is they who, when the time of punishment comes, make frantic appeals for that mercy they have never shown and for the pity that they have never understood.

Now and then certain humanitarians allege that pains and penalties effect little and that corporal punishment cannot deter. It may be so. But they embark on no constructive policy to gather to their bosoms men of brutal natures and beastly behaviour, nor do they indicate in what way these miscreants are to be punished or redeemed.

The cheapest expression of the reformer's zeal is to

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attack the *status quo*. It is very popular, very cheap, and it is sometimes even lucrative. Indeed, in a democratic age, it holds the potentialities of a new profession and the equipment for it involves neither discipline nor training.

The police Court receives a large attention from the public. It is the Court through which all prisoners must go, whether it be to freedom or the scaffold. In it the evidence is first given, the case against the prisoner is recorded and he may then go to freedom or the Central Criminal Court.

The public, too, try to assist in the administration of justice. Letters, authentic and unauthentic, are sent to the Bench, suggestions are made for and against litigants, and many are the offers of help in cases that make appeal to human sympathy. Even strangers try to shoot a beam of laughter across the routine of the Court. An applicant applied to one of the Courts for advice. "Can you tell me how to keep a woman's tongue still?"

The Magistrate: "I would give a good deal to discover that secret myself."

The dialogue was reported in the Press and some helpful member of the public sent under cover a picture post-card of a lady whose lips were padlocked together and wearing a steel bridle. The comment of the helpful member was this:

"Dear Sir,—I think this is the only way.—Bill Bailey."

It may be, indeed, that sending the post-card brought a burst of laughter to some victim and he

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felt that in his own way he had won a subtle revenge. "If only she knew I had done that!"

Life gives strange heartening to all of us in queer ways. The post-card perhaps, with its vulgar suggestion of triumph, helped a burdened man to begin again.

To the superficial, humour is an expression of a trifling spirit and the hall-mark of a small mind. The human virtues that deserve to be pursued are, of course, those that mark us off the rank and file, and everything that savours of humanity and levity should be eschewed. On reflection, it is curious that ponderous asininity should be accepted as a form of wisdom, and genial and sympathetic understanding should be condemned as superficial.

The plain truth is that humour is an instrument without which it is impossible to administer the criminal law with wisdom and understanding; and in the hands of a generous, sane, and capable judge it can achieve results far beyond the detached and cynical indifference that wears the semblance of dignity.

Magnanimity can never be ludicrous, and sympathetic insight can never be undignified. This truth is illustrated in the conspicuously brilliant career of Mr. Justice Darling.

In learning, wisdom, experience, knowledge of the world and of the human heart he is unexcelled. He maintains the high traditions of the English Bench for decorum and dignity. Yet he handles with rare skill and wisdom the appealing human instrument of

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humour. It is a lance that cuts through a cumbersome mass of ponderous irrelevancies. What appears to be a substance he reveals as a shadow ; what seems to be the last expression of legal wisdom he reveals as a commonplace absurdity ; what promises to be a new principle in law he reveals as a phantasy.

Mr. Justice Darling seems to believe that the law was made for man, and not man for the lawyers. To retain that as a living faith after his long years at the Bar and on the Bench is a rare achievement.

A dull dog is not synonymous with a wise judge, nor is lachrymosity the symbol of sympathy and sincerity. The great judge is he who gets closest to the heart of humanity and to the working of the human mind.

The characteristic of true humour is restraint. Life is not a music-hall, and the earnest man is not a clown. The normal day is woven out of many emotions, moods, experiences and incidents. There are sorrows as well as joy, laughter as well as tears, problems and perplexities as well as achievements and success. We meet at times the jester who sees in every occurrence the opportunity for his sterile wit, but he usually specializes in mothers-in-law and newly-arrived babies ; and there is the professional comedian who, naturally enough, must live. With these humour is an affectation or a necessity. For the one it is an outlet for egotism, for the other it is a means of earning his daily bread. With the judge humour is an instrument to be used in search of truth or in doing justice. It is the kindest weapon with which to kill

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submission by learned counsel, and the most winsome with which to lure witnesses to an honest frankness. Not seldom it touches a chord of forgiveness, and in the human atmosphere the tangled threads of life are straightened out.

In cases of gravity there is little place for the genial ministry of humour, though even here, at times, a witness will say something in a quaint way that shoots through the gloom like sunshine on a November day. There is a laughter that is wet with tears, and it is a halting-place for the human spirit on its way to Gethsemane. At such times one is touched with the infinite pathos of humanity, with wonderment at its splendours and possibilities. What is the divine gift that can lift a man's eyes from the vision of the scaffold and light his face with innocence and laughter ?

Are tears the distillation of laughter ? Is laughter the evanescence of sorrow ?

And such revelations give clues to the character of the witness. They reveal his mind, his motive, his disposition, his reliability, his credibility. Truth garbs herself in strange fashions, and often she makes herself seen in the garments of laughter.

Cases arise in both civil and criminal courts that can only be tried with humour, and often the difficulty is to keep the humours from degenerating into pure undiluted farce. To treat them seriously is to insult the whole judicial system and to encourage a type of litigant or complainant who is worm-eaten with egotism.

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It is humour that prohibits action on the part of male persons for breach of promise of marriage; an enlarging sense of humour will one day deter females from the same adventure. There are occasions for such actions where the defendant has grievously wronged the plaintiff, and the plaintiff has suffered damage both in person and reputation. But these are rare. Usually the compelling motive is exposure and revenge, and no revenge could be sweeter than facing a man in a public place with the epistles that he wrote in the delirium of his passion.

Not a few actions for defamation of character lack every element that demands serious consideration. They are usually the result of ruptured friendship. Confidences are not respected, and in the bitterness of their hate one or other, or both, say things that are an exaggeration. A writ brings the consolation of revenge. It is difficult for judges and juries to take seriously such occurrences, and in the mock seriousness of such a trial a useful exhibition is given of an ancient legal maxim: "*De minimis lex non curat.*"

Negligence and breach of warranty are fruitful fields of humour. Human nature, even on the Bench and clothed in silken robes, cannot miss the humour of an action brought by some fastidious diner who suffered damages by reason of a breach of warranty at the hands of some Restaurant Company Limited. The particulars in the statement of claim set forth the full circumstances of the said breach of warranty. The plaintiff ordered hare soup, and the company supplied him with soup that contained hair, and by

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reason of the premises the plaintiff became violently sick, and was unable to follow his occupation and incurred the costs of medical attention.

The plaintiff claims damages.

The statement of claim, with its clear, definite, dogmatic allegations drafted in the language of a skilled draughtsman, is a document that is a disclosure of pure humour. Its seriousness, its deliberation, its restrained exaggeration, are of the essence of humour. And it is experiences like these that make the law human and litigation a joy—to judges.

In the police courts humour is more widely and more justifiably used. It does more to maintain the King's peace than a detachment from Scotland Yard.

In police courts we have justice exhibited in human form, unqualified and unadorned. There is no scarlet and ermine, there are no wigs and gowns. The judge decides, admonishes, and punishes without any adventitious assistance. There is something very human and very appealing in justice in touch with the poor. This intimate contact induces a delightful frankness on the part of complainants and prisoners. There is not the atmosphere that compels the artificial. Homeliness and naturalness are the characteristics of the court. The people speak in the vernacular, and their metaphors are culled from the docks and Billingsgate and Covent Garden.

The interchange of opinions that goes on is a refreshing experience. One prisoner appeared the other morning on a charge of being drunk and incapable. The police had found him hanging on to

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some railings, and they took him to the station. He was asked what he had to say about it. He replied :

“ I met a lot of friends last night, and we had a night out together. One drink led to another, and then we began again. You know, sir, how it happens ! ”

I do not know whether his last sentence was an abbreviation of his explanation or an undeserved compliment to my capacity for friendship. Perhaps he intended it as a rebuke for taking seriously a gaiety for which he had atoned by a night in the cells.

And there was a streak of superfine philosophy somewhere in the old vagabond who was charged with stealing from the person, who explained the occurrence in his own way :

“ It’s quite true, sir, that my hand was in the lady’s pocket, but in the crowd I mistook it for my own ! ”

Prison and punishment must have left untouched some strange depths of joy.

Scotsmen often exhibit their disposition for metaphysics. One recently tried to draw a fine distinction. He strenuously denied a charge of being drunk, and was asked if he were sober at the time alleged. He admitted he was not sober, but was “ half and half.” When it was pointed out that the police had found him lying across the pavement, he urged that that might be because he was tired.

Street musicians make claim to be regarded as legitimate artists, and any suggestion that they are begging is bitterly resented. Perhaps these are the true minstrels who have lost their way in an unromantic and unchivalrous age. They invariably offer

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to justify their artistry by an exhibition from the dock, and tin whistles or asthmatical accordions are the vehicles of expression for the music that is in their hearts. Perhaps for the true artist it is hard to draw the line between the footlights of the West End and the gutterway of Aldgate, and in art for art's sake they find their exceeding great reward.

Strange and whimsical things create interests and enthusiasm for thousands in East London, and an East-Enders can get more excitement out of the contest in singing birds than a peer gets out of a racehorse at Epsom. And in cases of alleged cruelty the portentous dignity of the witnesses who come as experts on songsters is a supreme delight. No specialist from Harley Street exhibits the conscious superiority of the witness who told the court that "man and boy for forty years he had been in the profession."

All this represents a very definite angle of life, and in that angle the things that seem to those in other places trivialities, absurdities, and monstrosities are of the very essence of life and reality. And it is, perhaps, humour that impels to that seriousness of treatment and patience of inquiry that are of the essence of justice.

In the quarrels of neighbours one has an exhibition of rollicking farce. The diabolical skill with which one neighbour discovers the way to annoy another is a revelation in the adaptations of means to an end.

Lilting a popular melody seems a harmless enough proceeding, but it may carry an insulting innuendo

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that fires the blood. And a quiet conversation with a neighbour can be so pitched that the person discussed overhears the debate. One, of course, is entitled to lilt a tuneful melody, and one is equally entitled to talk to one's neighbour.

A favourite device that annoys is to shake the mats or sweep the yard when the neighbour is drying her newly-washed clothes.

A ponderous or pompous judiciality brought to bear on problems like these misses the real issue. A little ridicule, a little scathing comment on the pettiness and childishness of it all leads to a basis for a settlement.

Many attitudes and many instruments are needed in dealing with humanity. The one attitude that is to be eschewed is the pose of the little starched god in a tail-coat.

CHAPTER XI

THE WORLD AS SEEN FROM THE BENCH

THE world that is seen from the Bench is a microcosm of the millions of every race, colour and faith, of every impulse, temperament and desire that make up the human family.

We talk with them in their own tongues and metaphors, and discover that the elementals of life are strangely identical. There is less difference between the saints and sinners, between the East and West, than either is accustomed to believe.

Most people only see a short segment of life. The reputable sees his segment and the disreputable his. The reputable wonders how the disreputable can do the things that he does, and the disreputable wonders how long it will be before the reputable is found out.

Some of us have a segment from Waterloo to the Bank and from home to the golf club, and others a segment made up of flowers and leisure and sunshine, the resultant of a sure income and good digestion.

It was an unmathematical mind that invented the metaphor of an under-world. Indeed, I doubt if it were intended to express more than his own complacency and self-esteem. The normal world was his

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world, and the rest was either the half-world or the under-world. The half-world was a place for surreptitious delights, the under-world a place of sorrows to be avoided and ignored.

The world is much less easily divided, and, even accepting his unmathematical arrangement, the demi-monde has its Gethsemanes, and the under-world its Mountains of Transfiguration.

On the Bench of a Metropolitan police court we see the world as it is. It swings full circle day by day, and we see every segment of life. A vision of humanity in all its moods and manners, for better for worse, for richer for poorer, in sickness and in health.

We see it in its magnificence little lower than angels, and we see it in its misery little higher than the beasts. At times it touches the sublimest heights of the heroic.

There recently appeared at one of the Metropolitan police courts a man charged with deliberate and extensive larcenies. These he had arranged with not a little skill, and to make them effective he needed the co-operation of other men. These were easily found. In order to make certainty doubly sure, he attempted to bribe an employee at the moment the scheme was being safely carried out.

The employee took the money to gain confidence and time, but he gave the show away. The men were caught and put upon their trial. None of them had unsullied reputations, and it needed little acquaintance with law to know that on conviction the terms of penal servitude would be long. There were openings

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in the net of evidence through which the leader of the scheme might have escaped. Liberty was only possible at the cost of leaving the others.

All through the long trial he strove hard to take the whole responsibility, and he spared no pains to prove that the others thought his scheme was an honest undertaking. Nothing mattered but the safety of his companions. Largely through his efforts and his evidence his companions escaped, but he went to penal servitude for seven years.

I have met men of unblemished honour and unquestionable repute who have let me down on much less provocation. Truly seven years' penal servitude is stern test of comradeship.

In all the confusion and complexity of administering the criminal law there is present one strange and unavoidable impression, and it is philosophical justification for the newer methods of criminal administration.

There is something in the wrong-doer that dissociates itself from his wrong-doing. This is almost the normal attitude of offenders who are not habituals. The mood that impelled to the commission of the offence has passed, the passion that swept him into crime has died, the selfishness that wrought the fraud and wove the false pretence is acknowledged.

The prisoner views it from a new angle, measures it by a new standard, and his decision and condemnation are coldly orthodox and judicial.

It was the doing of himself, and yet not of himself. There is a higher self that judges and condemns, and that higher self may be the real personality.

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St. Paul has, in one of his letters, an acute analysis of such conflict in human personality. It is absolutely in point on this issue, and I quote it, not because it is written in the Scriptures, but because it is an important corroboration in experimental psychology :

“ We know that the law is spiritual ; but I am carnal, sold under sin. For that which I do I know not ; for not what I would that do I practice ; but what I hate that I do. But if what I would not, that I do, I consent unto the law that is good. So now it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me. For the good which I would I do not ; but the evil which I would not, that I do.”

Paul's doctrine of sin receives dramatic illustration day by day, in the sorrowful parade through the docks of the criminal courts.

There is not seldom suffering, repentance and remorse long before the law imposes its stigma and its penalty ; and at times prisoners stand in the dock to whose punishment the law can add little, and from whom no more genuine repentance can be obtained.

Were life less complex, society might well leave them to their sorrow and repentance in the sure knowledge that out of the bitterness of experience they had learnt wisdom. But one purpose of punishment is to deter. Society must teach its members to resist temptation and avoid passion. There lies behind life some great law of vicarious sacrifice, and out of the sufferings of others some learn wisdom and restraint.

To fix the true relation between the individual

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and the community, between individual suffering and corporate wisdom, constitutes one of the greatest problems of criminal administration. At no time has any State entrusted to its judges and magistrates so wide a discretion as is now entrusted by Great Britain. There is a discretion ranging from penal servitude and years of preventive detention to discharging the offender without the stigma of conviction. No statute could be more magnificent in its magnanimity than the Probation of Offenders Act. It is impossible to enlarge the discretion that is given to the Bench.

The State has opened a wide door through which men and women may walk towards newness of life. Every fact and circumstance associated with the commission of an offence requires consideration, for one man may merit imprisonment or penal servitude, another some sympathetic touch that will help him to take up the burden of life again with new heart and renewed courage.

There is no human emotion, impulse, passion, motive, that is not disclosed in a criminal court. Love at its highest and lowest. Hate, greed, lust, selfishness, magnanimity, greatness of forgiveness, despair at its deepest that responds to no human touch, warming to no words of human sympathy, challenging God, the grave and death to do the worst that they know. There are dead men adrift in a glad world.

But the segments of life are not all steeped in sorrow and pain. There are times when prisoners

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bring to the dock with them an exceeding gaiety. Minor indiscretions, bubbling *joie de vivre*, a slight misunderstanding or more than slight intoxication may result in a charge of violating a statute or infringing the common law.

In spite of the tragedies that sometimes follow as the sequels of drink, most of the night charges relate to the incapacity or the insolence begotten of wine. The slow march of time through midnight to dawn gives occasion for reflection, and now and then there is little left of the gaiety of the night before when the reveller climbs wearily the two steps that bring him to the dock.

A sleepless night and the reaction from alcohol induce a strange frankness, and men and women disclose their intimate thoughts and the fruition of the night's reflection. There is more wisdom disclosed from the dock of a police court than in a hundred prelatric homilies, and it is wisdom begotten in experience and tested in a cell.

Wit is not antagonistic to wisdom. It is frequently the vehicle of expression of the wise, and it takes queer shapes and uses strange metaphors as repentant men face the world from the elevation of the dock. In the fervency of their regrets they use the vernacular, and to the fastidious the vernacular is vulgar. Metaphors become mixed, and in the intensity of high resolve Shavian adjectives make up for a defective vocabulary.

The first offenders are usually overwhelmed with

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shame, and the old offenders assume an air of repentance that they have long lost. Invariably the occurrence was accidental—the casual meeting with an old friend who fought with him in France, or a long-lost brother, and the friend or brother insisted on sealing the renewed friendship in the generally accepted way.

I seldom meet a man who buys his own drink. If the explanations submitted to me are accurate, the population of East London, like Ancient Gaul, is divided into three parts: those who pay for drinks but are never drunk, those who are often drunk but never buy it, and the police.

All drink is a gift, and all drunkenness is an accident or a mistake. Nobody buys drink, and nobody drinks too much. Variations of physical fitness and nervous reactions induced by marital infelicity are the real cause of the misfortune of arrest, and the divisional surgeon has often to be called to certify that the misfortune can be medically attributed to drink.

But drink does more than add a touch of gaiety to a grey world, and the disorderliness that is often coupled with it in a charge represents a night of acute suffering for childhood.

Wives and children are driven terror-stricken into the blackness of a November night, and the ears of children are outraged by foul epithets and filthy metaphors, and brutal assaults sometimes occur.

There are fewer habitués than one would expect in an area like East London, but one does find them, and the servitude of drink is a ghastly slavery. It

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produces a dissolution of every virtue that makes manhood and womanhood, and the despair of the victims is a revelation of the terrible.

They even cease to appeal for mercy or a chance. They have fallen so often and so completely that they will try no more. I have watched a weeping woman, sobbing out a litany of despair: "Oh, what shall I do? O God, what shall I do?"

"Wine that maketh glad the heart of man." "Wine is a mocker, strong drink is raging, and whosoever is deceived thereby is not wise."

So it is written. One more of life's paradoxes.

"Insulting words and behaviour whereby a breach of the peace may be occasioned." These words out of a section of the Police Act mean practically doing something of which the police disapprove. The offences range from the insulting behaviour of some half-drunken churl who interferes with the comfort of others in public vehicles and public places to the emotional elation of some sailorman who, at midnight, strolls shipwards singing "The songs that mother sang," "Put me among the girls," or "Yes! we have no bananas." The real menace to the public peace is, I suppose, that some householder disturbed in his slumber might attempt to shut the sailor's mouth and so occasion a breach of the King's peace.

There is, too, a world of tragedy. Blood is spilt at times; men and women are taken to the gallows. Sometimes it is done in passion, sometimes in cold deliberation. A moment of blind forgetfulness, and the deed is done and repented of almost simultane-

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ously, or some wrong is nursed and fed through long weeks, and the deed is done and accepted without repentance and without regret.

One time the motive is love, another time it is hate. One time it is one of those subliminal passions, another time it is the prompting of a diseased and disordered mind.

Life leads her children to strange pathways of discipline and revelation and repentance. Perhaps, too, she whispers words of consolation that are only heard when the eyes are blind with weeping. She does hush them into a strange quietness, and at long last she seems to lead the human spirit into some haven of peace.

There is a wonderful resilience in human character. In some it is indomitable, but that is only in the lesser wrong-doing. It is surprising how often humour springs out, and the laughter is the handiwork of the accused. In the desperation of his attempt to gain his freedom he evolves some quaint explanation, some matter of extenuation, some defence that is glorious in its utter irrelevancy. And prisoners will at times spin words into sentences without coherence and without relation in the hope that by some combination or conspiracy of facts an idea will evolve that may justify release. It is challenging life to produce a miracle.

Judicial innocence, chiefly on the High Court Bench, has not been in vain, and a type of offender operates on the assumption that the Bench lives in some detached world far removed from the realities

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of the world that is. Not seldom he is wrong, for those who sit in judgment have usually an intimate acquaintanceship with life, with its temptations, its weaknesses, its lures, its joys and sorrows ; and it may be that it is out of that intimate knowledge, out of the happy fortune of his own escapes, that a judge or magistrate can mete out with a gentle hand the punishment that has been earned by wrong-doing.

And sometimes one is driven to reflect whether, if Fate had been less kind, the occupants of the Bench and the dock might not have changed places. At all events we have entered on a new era for the unfortunate, and the new ideal is to help and to heal rather than to destroy ; for even in the dock a man may find a great compassion and a hopeful comradeship.

The world as seen from the Bench is just the world that is made up of you and me and the other fellow, and the foolish lad and the wayward girl that are standing in the dock might easily be yours or mine.

One can see by the outbursts of sympathy towards convicted persons when, owing to some dramatic circumstance, society becomes aware of them, that the social conscience is uneasy at times about our methods of punishment. The imagination becomes inflamed by a visualization of the suffering and anguish of those who are held as hostages of death or wait for the passing of the long grey years that will herald in the dawn of freedom. The most sophisticated is conscious that he is counting the days till a murderer

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has atoned, and he marshals to his mind that the middle-aged felon will only see the sun again when he is an old man with lined face and hair whitened by time and tears.

Which is the more pathetic—Bywaters or Bottomley? On the morning of an execution we walk in imagination with the convict to the gallows, and the words of the Burial Service echo and re-echo in the memory until we pull back the mind from a vision that is too dreadful to be endured. The heart grows sick, the nerves tingle with an unrestrainable reaction. Life is shot through and through with sheer terror. For “who knows the measure of his days?”

When a sane and reasoned judgment is brought to bear on the problem, we acknowledge that there must be punishment. There must be a distinction between the law-abiding and the lawless, between the honest and the dishonest; there must be a deterrent to stimulate the will and to fortify resolve, and this because there are the facts of good and evil in the world.

At one angle of life we are compelled to accept a philosophy of pure determinism. We are what we are, and what must be will be. Our mental, moral and physical inheritance happened. The thoughts we think and the things we do are the fruition of things that lie far beyond the domain of our volition, and some are the heirs of a terrible entail. The syphilitic blind child, the epileptic, the deaf and dumb, the

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mentally defective—these have drifted into a sorrowful world, and they are without equipment for its temptations and its tasks.

And so we pass through mysterious and undefined stages that differentiate sanity from insanity, physical health from physical degeneracy, normal action from perverted reaction—a vast wilderness of unexplored emotions, impulses, passions, dreams, transgressions.

Where is the dividing line, and what are its characteristics? Is there certitude and finality? A vast, perplexing problem faces society, and the non-solution of it affects the whole social fabric. A distinguished judge, Mr. Justice Adair Roche, has more than once commented on this problem. Must society allow the mentally, morally and physically unfit to continue recruiting a great army of the more unfit, generation succeeding generation in an enlarging unfitness till the disordered mind in some frenzy violates the criminal law?

The social conscience is revolted by the idea of exacting from such the full penalty of the law, and they are maintained by the community till they are released by an alleged return of mental health or by the visitation of death.

Apart from the mentally or physically unfit there is day by day an endless parade of those who violate the law, people credited with full responsibility for their misdeeds. The vast majority of those who stand in the dock are charged with trivial offences, though all of them have through some lack of self-

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control violated the law. Those offences are only relatively trivial, for possibilities have to be envisioned.

It is not absolutely trivial for a man or woman to become so intoxicated as to lose the normal functioning of their minds and members, nor is it absolutely trivial to attack, in drink, a neighbour or a passer-by. Both these apparently trivial matters have landed men on the scaffold and in penal servitude for long terms of years.

More and more, society has aimed at assisting the prisoner to avoid the pitfalls that beset him. The experience of a prison cell and the shame of the dock have both a steadying effect, and stimulate generally to a resistance to temptation. This stimulation can be administered without a sentence of imprisonment. A brief remand in custody gives occasion for grave reflections, and a probation order for twelve months keeps alive the memory of the experience. Imprisonment is to be avoided if possible.

Familiarity with prison may lessen its value, and when a convicted person faces the cells without demur, their worth as a punishment or a deterrent becomes of little account. The utmost that can be said is that society has shut the delinquent away where he will cease to annoy it for the period specified in the sentence.

Whatever be the method employed, whether it be generosity or severity, in dealing with offenders, it is useless unless in some way it reacts on the mind and heart of the offender. The desideratum is to stimulate

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his will, and, above all, to leave no rankling sense of injustice. To create a passion for revenge, a hatred against society, a resolve to get his own back, is as futile as it is foolish. It has been demonstrated again and again that an emotion stirred by some act of generosity or sympathy has in it a stimulus sufficiently strong to beat down the impulse to a renewal of the disordered life. Affection is stronger than hatred, and magnanimity than malice.

An old convict with many convictions of penal servitude behind him is at this moment fighting his way back to honour, though he is past sixty, and he has weathered the storm a year. The dominating idea in his mind is that he has found a friend who believes in him and thinks it worth while to help him. He and his friend have never met, they have never corresponded. I do not think they know each other's name. But the convict knows that somewhere up near by the Tyne a friend wants him to be a better man, believes in him, and is backing him with his money. What a stimulus that is! A stranger somewhere out in life's great wilderness sought him and found him and believes in him, and the old grey criminal, in response to some strange law of love or life, is trying to be worthy of that faith.

There is, of course, always a residue that mistake generosity for weakness. What they want is not a chance, but a means of escape from their present trouble. They will pledge anything and promise anything, trusting to luck for the future. They revolt

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against the ordinary disciplines of an ordered life. They dislike work, restraint, effort, monotony. The great adventure of a criminal career appeals. It is they against society, and they must be shut away in the interests of the self-preservation of the community.

There is in one of our convict prisons a man not yet forty who already has done several terms of penal servitude. He typifies the problem. There are about him many qualities of chivalry, daring, frankness and honour that are winsome and appealing. He has had chances from sympathetic judges and from the luck of the game. In spite of all he relapses into a criminal career. He takes his sentence as a part of the price he pays for his career, and on release he will return to crime. He holds no spite or bitterness against the law or the police, and his philosophy is summed up in his confession at his last arrest : " Well, sergeant, you've won this round ! "

The only issue is as to the methods to be adopted in relation to the recidivists. They must be restrained ; if possible they must be deterred. Time and experience may make them responsive to some nobler purpose. And it is perhaps well to remember that the temper that produces this type is found in other domains of life as well as in the dock.

I know a man of forty who has done no work and responded to no obligations since he left school at sixteen. He was brought up in a decent home, educated at a good school, and offered opportunities of a successful career. He turned away from everything that imposed the least restraint on his will.

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He would not work, nor would not want. He refused to discuss the situation. He paid no heed to reproaches or appeals, and so the years have passed. He has responded to no stimuli that have been tried, and he is living in the home of his boyhood, an incubus on his relations and a useless member of society.

This is not an uncommon type. There are public school and University men, equipped for professional careers, whose lives have been crowded with opportunities of achieving distinction and success, but they turn aside and drift through the years, a heartbreak and burden on their relatives, and a perplexing problem to themselves.

A changed domestic and economic position would have placed this type into the category of the born criminal, but it was so ordained that these could lead an aimless, undisciplined and effortless life without conflict with the criminal law. In temperament and texture they are indistinguishable from the criminal.

Such men count little on loss of liberty, and less on loss of reputation. They are indifferent to the normal attachments and obligations of life. They are completely self-centred and detached.

It is doubtful how far such should be treated as moral invalids. Dislike of discipline and desire for the easy way are not unavoidable maladies. The community must guard against the ready assumption that idlers and evil-doers are to be visited with sympathy and generosity. If the stigma of shame is removed and the treatment is made attractive, it

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may lead to the discovery that most of us are potential moral invalids. The Law must steer a middle course between the emotional outbursts of the unbalanced and the unsympathetic detachment of the untempted. And the tone and temper of modern criminal administration is to give the unfortunate a new chance, and to help the needy and the sorrowful. But *mens rea* can neither be forgotten nor ignored.

Amongst the many panaceas that are presented as the cure for humanity's woes and misfortunes, education holds a foremost place. And this is notably the case in relation to the unhappy individuals who offend the State and relapse again and again into criminal offences. In every discussion of the problem of crime and the criminal, education is invariably put forward as the thing more ardently to be desired. Educate, and there will be an end to crime.

In very recent days two of the most conspicuous and dramatic criminals that ever stood in the dock at the Old Bailey were the products of the public schools, and one of them was a graduate of Oxford. One was sentenced to death, the other sent to penal servitude for seven years. They were nurtured in the culture and traditions of the public school, and the greatness of their opportunities is the measure of their tragedies.

Education does not eliminate the frailties of the race, and back behind the classics, economics, modern history and jurisprudence there lie just those passions and temptations that beset the more illiterate of the populace. Neither Homer nor Horace says the last

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word, and human nature in gown and mortar-board has a strange resemblance to human nature in corduroy.

There is material enough out of which to make an interesting contribution to the literature of crime in the public school and University men who, forgetful of the honour of their schools and colleges, have brought disgrace to their Alma Mater. So it is to-day, and so has it been throughout the generations.

Robert Ramsey was born near Grosvenor Square, W., and educated at the historic Westminster School. On leaving school, he decided to qualify in medicine, and was apprenticed to an apothecary in town. There appear to have been traditions attaching to a medical student's career even in those days, and Ramsey went the pace at its swiftest. The billiards saloon claimed more of his time and enthusiasm than the dissecting-room, and games of chance made stronger appeal than materia medica and pharmacy. It was said of him that his skill at games was remarkable, so much so that he invariably "stripped his companions." Hectic nights are not conducive to the studious habit nor to the pursuit of thrift. "Come easy, go easy" is an economic truism. Years of youth pass swiftly, and studious habits are easily lost. It used to be said that less than twenty per cent. of the men who register as medical students ever attain a medical qualification. Eighty per cent. get shipwrecked somewhere in the years between registration and qualification. Ramsey belonged to the class that enjoy the privileges of student life, but avoid

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its tasks and obligations and opportunities. But broken-down medical students must live, and in crises men fall back on those qualities in which they excel. Ramsey's methods were a mixture of cleverness and impudence. Easy grace, good manners and gentlemanly bearing are always a valuable asset in forming friendships and winning confidences, and the worth of the public school touch in a career of fraud is incalculable. There are things gentlemen don't do ! Ramsey paraded the old school, and in the glamour of its traditions he was accepted as a gentleman.

The first recorded fraud on a big scale was cleverly conceived and impudently executed. It was an elaborate affair, but Ramsey found the people and the occasion in detail, and made each part fit into the scheme. Appropriately enough the innocent instrument around which the whole plan moved was an unsuspecting curate, who was led to believe that he was carrying out the duties of his holy office.

Blandly he waited through the long hours as each stage of the plot ripened, and no suspicion crossed his innocent mind until he was arrested on the charge of being concerned in the fraud.

Ramsey had a friend called Carr, and they frequented a coffee-house which was used by professional people. Here they met a clergyman, and a casual acquaintance sprang up between the parties. They told enough about themselves to warrant the assumption that they were gentlemen. There are things gentlemen don't do !

In Carr's absence, one day, Ramsey told the curate

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that he had a secret about which he wished to consult him, and asked for his honourable assurance that he would respect it. The curate gave his assurance, and Ramsey disclosed the secret. Carr was in love with a young and very wealthy widow, who returned the ardent passion and was anxious to marry Carr. Unhappily, though there were no grounds on which reasonable objection could be made, her relations steadfastly refused to sanction it. Carr and the widow had decided to marry, but the lady, not unnaturally, disliked being married at the Fleet. There was something unpleasant in the associations of that place. The curate listened to the story and sympathized with the parties, and accepted Ramsey's offer of twenty guineas to marry the young couple. It was agreed that they should meet at a tavern near the Royal Exchange the next day.

Ramsey told Carr what had happened, and next morning he went to the curate and said that if the lady took her own footman he might be recognized, and in the circumstances he, Ramsey, proposed to disguise himself in livery and attend the curate. A carriage was then hired for the curate, and Ramsey got up behind, dressed in livery, and they drove to the tavern, where wine was called for, of which Ramsey persuaded the curate to drink so freely that he fell asleep, when Ramsey picked his pockets and took away his keys. The curate, after his sleep, inquired for the young couple that were to be married. Ramsey called for more wine, and said he would go in search of them. Ramsey went off to the curate's

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house, produced the keys to the landlady and said he had been sent by the gentleman for some papers in his desk. The landlady, seeing the keys, admitted him, and allowed him to search for the papers he wanted. Ramsey stole a diamond ring, valued at forty pounds, and a hundred pounds of money. He went back to the tavern and told the curate that the young couple would shortly arrive, and urged him to order a good dinner. Whilst the curate was eating, Ramsey said he would go and order the ring and come back immediately. He had not long been absent when a jeweller brought the ring, which he said was for a baronet and his lady, who were coming to be married.

The curate asked him to drink the health of the happy couple, and just then Ramsey returned and told the jeweller that he was wanted at once, and that he must return, as his master was waiting for him. As soon as the jeweller had gone, Ramsey took the ring, saying the wrong one had been brought and he would take it back. The jeweller, by this time, had discovered that he was not wanted, and hurried back to the tavern, thinking himself lucky that the curate had not departed. He sent at once for a constable and gave the curate in charge for stealing the ring. The curate was indignant at such monstrous proceedings, but the jeweller was insistent, and the curate was taken before a magistrate. The jeweller related that the ring had been ordered some days before by a man who, he thought, was an accomplice of the curate, and he had been tricked into parting with it.

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The clergyman, being a man of good repute, was released on bail and ultimately discharged.

Ramsey changed his venue and went to Chester, where he passed himself off as an Irishman who had been studying medicine on the Continent and was returning to Ireland. The landlord of his hotel, suffering from gout, was treated by Ramsey. The attack, which was a mild one, passed off in a few days, and the landlord attributed his cure to the skill of Ramsey.

Ramsey, who assumed the name of Dr. Johnson, now dressed himself as a physician, and indicated in devious ways the extent of his knowledge and the success of his treatment. He made a striking appeal by his announcement that he would treat the poor without expense. Dr. Johnson became a notable addition to the philanthropists of Chester. A young lady, suffering from asthma and possessed of a fortune, became one of his patients. The lady's physical ailment offered him a fine field for the display of sympathetic attentions that won a quick response, and Ramsey proposed to her. The lady acquainted her uncle of the proposed marriage, and he urged delay in view of the fact that her suitor was a gentleman with whose character and circumstances she was entirely unacquainted. With reluctance the lady consented to a postponement of the wedding, and Ramsey showed copies of letters that he had written to people of distinction, who could answer for his honesty and integrity. Whilst awaiting eventualities, Ramsey met in the streets of Chester the curate whom

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he had fooled at the tavern near the Royal Exchange. Ramsey thought it wise to leave Chester at the earliest moment, and inquired when a boat sailed to Dublin ; a boat was due to sail that night.

Ramsey went and spent the afternoon with his fiancée, and taking the opportunity of her absence from the room for a brief period, he opened a drawer and stole a diamond ring and fifty pounds out of eighty that were in the bag. He invited the lady to spend the evening at his lodgings and play cards with him. They spent some time together in his rooms, when Ramsey indicated that somebody appeared to have called, and he went down to find the nature of their business. He hastily returned and told the lady that the caller was her uncle. She was upset at this contretemps and looked for some way of escape. Ramsey consoled her with tender solicitude, and said he would lock the door, and should her uncle be desirous of entering the room he would pretend that the key was lost.

The lady waited patiently for the lover's return, but Ramsey had sailed for Dub'in Bay. Having got aboard the ship he sent her a letter unparalleled in its impudence.

“DEAR MADAM,

“I doubt not but you will be extremely surprised at the sudden disappearance of your lover, but when you begin to consider what a dreadful precipice you have escaped, you will bless your stars. By the time this comes to hand, I shall be pretty near

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London, and as for the trifle I borrowed of you, I hope you will excuse it, as you know I might have taken the whole, as I would, but you see there is still some conscience amongst the doctors.

“The ring I intend to keep for your sake, unless the hazard-table disappoints me, and if ever fortune puts it in my power, I will make you a suitable return ; but, till then, take this advice. Never let a strange doctor possess your affections any more. I had almost forgotten to ask pardon for making you my prisoner, but I doubt not but old Starchface, your uncle, would detain me a little longer if he could find me. Adieu !

“R. JOHNSON.”

Having gone the pace in the Irish capital, Ramsey took ship to Bristol and returned to London, where he found his younger brother, and they agreed to act together in criminal enterprises. They committed a series of robberies and specialized in the stealing of plate. They carefully elaborated a plan for breaking and entering premises in Hatton Garden, and they carried out the scheme with great success and got away with a large quantity of plate. Owing to the extent of the robbery, handbills were at once circulated giving particulars of the stolen property, and the brothers were arrested whilst offering the plate for sale to a Jew in Duke's Place. The Lord Mayor, on examination of the prisoners, admitted the younger brother in evidence against the elder. And at the ensuing sessions at the Old Bailey, Robert Ramsey was tried, convicted and sentenced to death.

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He was hanged at Tyburn on January 13th, 1742.

In the contemplation of such careers there come to mind the words of Thomas Gray, "On a distant prospect of Eton College":

"Alas! regardless of their doom
The little victims play!
No sense have they of ills to come,
Nor care beyond to-day;
Yet see how all around them wait
The ministers of human fate
And black misfortune's baneful train!
Ah! show them where in ambush stand
To seize their prey the murderous band!
Ah, tell them they are men."

CHAPTER XII

WOMEN AND CRIME

IT is a curious phenomenon that relatively few women appear in the criminal dock, and most of the offences alleged against them are of a less serious character than those committed by men. When due allowance is made for the fact that women predominate numerically in the community, it reduces the percentage of women criminals very considerably.

If the offences that are peculiar to women, such as solicitation and those associated with their distinctive sex, are eliminated, the proportion of offenders to population is striking.

In ordinary street offences, like drunkenness and disorderliness, obstruction, insulting behaviour whereby a breach of the peace may be occasioned, the number of women offenders appears to be small. Indeed, it is only in the poorer areas of the Metropolis and the larger industrial towns and cities that women are generally charged with those offences at all, and they are usually only an expression of a momentary loss of self-control.

This qualified immunity from crime is probably

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one expression of the characteristic qualities of women, or it may be a resultant of their political and social dependency. The alleged emancipation of women may qualify this state of affairs, but it is doubtful. Political doctrines and theories of sociology affect the generality of people very much less than do the conventions and traditions by which they direct the course of their lives, and these conventions and traditions will outlive our generation.

The offences that women commit are frequently those that give expression to their essentially womanly qualities. Shop-lifting is one type of offence, and the lady of fortune may succumb as readily as the out-of-work governess or the daughter of the artisan. They go on a shopping expedition, and dress and adornment become an obsession. On all sides they see things that make large appeal to their artistic tastes or their vanity, and in some weak moment they steal the things that have fascinated them.

There are, of course, professional shop-lifters who haunt the crowded stores and find in them the opportunity of stealing, just as the pickpocket finds his sphere at crowded tram termini or bus stopping-places. These latter are professional criminals, and they commit their offences with skill and deliberation. The casual shop-lifter slips into crime in a weak moment, and despair seizes her when she is discovered.

It is a pitiful spectacle when a woman of good reputation and possessed of all the things essential for a happy life finds herself caught in the meshes of the

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law, and no one is more shocked and surprised than is the woman herself. She is baptized with the agony of an unutterable shame. The inconceivable has happened. The impossible has come to pass. She is standing in the dock. She is a criminal. There is frequently the defence of nervous breakdown, and eminent specialists may give expert evidence on the mental health of the offender. This chiefly relates to offenders of social position and financial ease. It is a fact to be considered. This class has less incentive to steal and less justification for stealing, but there is for some people, irrespective of social status, an attraction in getting something for nothing. But disordered impulses deserve consideration, whether the offender be rich or poor.

Human nature is strangely complex, and it is this complexity that makes the task of a careful magistracy so difficult. Then there is the social punishment to be borne by respectable women, irrespective of their social status, and time can never purge away the social disgrace. The deed will be remembered against her and her family until the third generation.

Women are often associated with crime because of their affection for some male criminal, and in spite of the grave misdeed one can see behind it something that is akin to beauty. It may be a mother for her son, or a sister for her brother, but it is more often that intimate attraction and bond that we call human love. I have watched it again and again. The woman, forgetful of the strange environment, forgetful of the cells and the police, forgetful of the

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coming conviction and the long, lonely months or years, watches only for the glance that carries a message of affection. And I have seen the woman and the man touch hands just for a moment as they stood together in the dock—the expression of that mystic tie that holds the hearts of men and women together.

It is a sight full of pathos and tears and beauty. The barrier that society builds up to shut off the criminal section of the community melts into nothingness. The crime, for an instant, is forgotten. Safeguarding the rights of persons or property, the punishment of offenders, the principles of criminal jurisprudence, are unthought of. It is just a spectacle of that mysterious, romantic attachment that makes the poetry of the world.

At times the woman is not charged or is not convicted. In some way she has managed to escape. She is strangely indifferent to all the laws that hold together the fabric of society. Society for her does not exist, and she is unappreciative of her freedom. She listens only for the words of doom. And when the penalty is spoken, be it for months or many years, a sob rises in her throat. She only remembers that he is her man and that he is going away into a grey night. And the greatest favour that the law can grant her is permission to say farewell and to take the last embrace in the stone corridor that is lined with the cells with iron doors.

But women stand in the dock alone at times. Some

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thunderbolt of tragedy has burst about them. The passions have been quietened, the frenzy has died, and there is only a terrible silence and a terrible solitude. The remnant of chivalry that is in us moves to a great pity, for few can stand the strain of the reaction and the silence and the solitude. One can almost hear the beating of their hearts, and one can easily see the terrible reaction of remorse.

No institution sets in true perspective the facts of life so completely as the dock of the criminal courts. Matters that seemed of large import shrivel into nothingness, and the things that were taken for granted and frequently forgotten become the overwhelming facts. Freedom is one. Few can appreciate the glory of directing without restraint our own doings. We go here or there; we arrange this or that; we have days by the river or near the sea; we wander through the leafy lanes of Surrey and watch the splendours of the dying day. We accept those fruitions of freedom without grace or gratitude. They are the common incidents of our daily life.

The glory of freedom was expressed in the quiet appeal of the old convict who pleaded that a sentence might be shortened by a month or so in order that he might see the sun. At the touch of the criminal law the prisoner is a captive. He lives behind bolts and bars. Everything he does is done to order. He walks when he is told, and sleeps in his allotted place. He eats and drinks what is brought to him, and his language is only a litany.

Comradeship, too, goes with freedom. The dock

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is a place that revivifies affection, and love that seemed to be dead springs up into a passionate activity. The intensest longing is for the very brief association that the law allows, though for years the man or woman had found life's attractions far beyond the radius of the hearth.

The essentials and the simplicities of life prevail, and men long for quietness, domesticity and human love. The glamour of life's pageantry fades away, the desire for public approval and appreciation dies, and men who wasted years and effort in servitude to a dazzling publicity would gladly go back into the quiet waters of an uncontrolled obscurity. One has watched the passing and repassing of these thoughts and emotions in men's faces as they waited for the stroke of doom that would shatter for ever their reputation and their fortune. The letters of the convicted breathe just those sentiments and homely ideas that gather round the simpler life. It is in the simple things that they find their consolations, and it is in obscurity and affection that they hope to find one day forgetfulness and surcease from the cares that have broken their hearts.

The crimes of women are at times the expression of some torn romance, and these usually take a tragic course. In the blindness of jealousy or remorse they desire some methods of revenge that involve a lethal weapon or a corrosive fluid. They aim at death and disfigurement. In the dock only the dead embers remain of the passion that flared so recklessly. But the

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deed is done, and the blinded man or woman who is led to the witness-box is only an added anguish to the prisoner's despair. It is terrible to see the fruition of passion, and it is terrible to see the repentance that can make no atonement and the sorrow that is fruitless and futile.

There stood in the dock a woman who had reached the climacteric of life. She should have been passing into the reposeful years when motherhood is a memory and children's children clamber about her knees and repeat the happy incidents that made glad her more youthful years. Some kink in her mind set her afire with jealousy, and she thought her husband had transferred his affections to some strange and more youthful woman. She nurtured the viper in her bosom, and one day its poison found expression in a diabolical deed.

In the stillness of the night she took from below her pillow a bottle of corrosive fluid and flung it into the face of her sleeping husband. It burst and disfigured him, and she was taken to the dock in the morning. All the tale of unjustified jealousy was told, the secret incidents of domestic life were blazoned abroad, the sacred intimacies of home were disclosed and discussed in a public place. In the shock of the crime the mind became stabilized. But, ah ! what is done is done, and another tragedy is enacted before the wondering gods.

Discarded mistresses, betrayed girls, neglected and abandoned wives in the blindness of hate or the reck-

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lessness of passion attempt to measure out justice to those who have wronged them and outraged their trust and confidence. But the penalty of the law is very stern on those who kill or disfigure.

In response to some impulse young girls embark upon a career of stealing in order to make themselves sexually attractive. They are blinded with some strange recklessness. In the postal service they steal letters and parcels and forge endorsements on cheques and orders ; in shops they steal ribbons and finery ; in domestic service they steal money. Nature seems regardless in the lures with which she entices men and women, for out of the mightiness of love often comes a mightiness of sorrow.

There stood in the dock a girl of eighteen, of good parentage and unblemished reputation. She had won a position in the Civil Service, and was employed in an important post office. During the war she formed an attachment with a young corporal, and it ripened into a passionate love. The corporal was moved to a distant dépôt preparatory to his going overseas. His pay was small and the distance very great. The girl wanted to see him on every available occasion, but money was needed for the fares. Love is blind very often to the nature of our deeds. The girl stole once from letters, and that gave her her lover for the week-end. She stole again and grew familiar with the wrong. But she was caught and sent to prison for nine months. What a cry of bitterness rang across the assize court as they led her away to the cells below ! The crying girl, the

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sobbing mother, and the lover dumb in his anguish. But so it was.

To some natures the illicit makes a strong appeal ; indeed, it seems at times as though the illicit is of the very essence of the romantic. That a thing is wrong makes it doubly attractive and irresistibly to be desired. Life has a strange fashion of weaving a glory and glamour about its pitfalls, and no frequency of tragedy and sorrow seems sufficient to warn the unwary and to cause the thoughtless to ponder.

Illicit love has opened the gateway of tragedy to many women. Daring greatly they have suffered much, and in the anguish of their suffering they have wondered how it came to pass that they should have done the things that they did.

Temperament, environment, some chance happening or special circumstance turned what was only moral turpitude into a grim and cruel crime. Perhaps this tragic truth never received a fuller illustration than in the experiences that recently led to the execution of a youth and a married woman.

A relationship began in that mutual attraction that begets friendship and unless restrained warms into a passionate love. The whole setting of that intimacy had all the elements of an intense romance. Long summer days together, long separations, and all the emotions that are associated with the sea and storms and distant lands. Reunions after such separations strained every reserve of self-control. Every surrender was a link in the chain of serfdom, and, to vary the

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metaphor, the last surrender was the first step to the scaffold.

In all that terrible story of two lives swept by storms of passion that destroyed judgment, honour, virtue, and impelled to the doing of the unthinkable thing, there is one touch of nobility, of chivalry. Bywaters, in hot blood killed the husband of his mistress, but in cold blood he strove hard to carry all the load of responsibility on his own back. He went to his place of atonement with a dignity and composure that merited a better fate.

It is a curious fact that usually the idealized man who has won the passionate response of a woman's love is an unromantic coward. With wiles and cunning he simulates the arts of a great passion, and in the hour of exposure and agony he abandons her to her shame.

Perhaps the supreme height of tragedy is reached in the debauchery of a home and the debasing of a wife and mother. In such an adventure it might be expected that women would demand some proof of honour and some pledge of honesty. No honourable man lightly invades the honour and sanctity of a home and puts in jeopardy the happiness and welfare of children, and no honest man asks the woman to carry all the risks and dishonour. Yet women who make large demands on the honour and honesty of their husbands make less than none upon their paramours.

Self-respect should dictate at least this challenge that the passionate lover should openly take away the woman whom he loves with such adoration. This

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simple challenge, sincerely uttered, would spare many women abandonment and disgrace. The seducer travels light and avoids all legal attachments. Legal bonds are the obligations of humdrum husbands.

War has always afforded opportunities to this foul type of adventurer, and the recent world war shattered many homes and distracted many men. In some mad frenzy women were allured by the attractive swagger of strangers and adventurers, and they forgot honour, their former ordered lives and their obligations to their children. Some were forgiven and restored to their place in the husband's home and affection ; some walk by night in the purlieus of great cities, outcast from the homes of honest men, and abandoned by the lover who once tempted and thrilled them with the story of his great and enduring passion.

Perhaps no grimmer and more romantic story of unfaithfulness, tragedy, atonement and resurrected love was ever told than that which gathers about the life and sorrow of Margaret Dickson.

Seldom indeed has any human soul paid a heavier penalty for trusting faith or plumbed so fully the depths of sorrow and disgrace. No infamy and no grief seem to have missed her, and at the end of a long day of unutterable despair she comes back again to a literal resurrection of a great love. And it is a husband's love which she had once so shamefully betrayed.

Margaret Dickson was the daughter of poor parents

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who lived at Musselburgh, and she was brought up with that careful regard for religious and secular education that is so characteristic of the Scottish people. At that time Musselburgh was inhabited almost entirely by fishermen, saltmakers, and those directly or indirectly associated with the sea. Edinburgh, some five miles or so away, was the chief market for the disposal of the fish and other things sold by the Musselburgh folk. The women carried their wares to Edinburgh, and "cried" them through the streets.

There grew up an affection between the Scottish girl and a lad of the village, and in due course they were married at the parish kirk.

Together they led their unromantic life, made up of work and leisure, the coming of children and increasing responsibilities. Nothing seems to have troubled their quiet ways, for husband and wife found in each other and in the children an outlet for affection and care. The years went by, and they dwelt in the security of an unchallenged love.

There was a shortage of men for the Navy, and it is by the sea that men are found fit to serve the King. Dickson was impressed into the service, and he sailed away in the King's ships.

Conscription leaves an ache in women's hearts and a void in their lives. The threads of their ordered lives are ravelled and torn, and there is a sense of desolation. Loneliness settles like a mist upon the heart. Those days of desolation are the days of danger,

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and there are always "comforters" about who are anxious to relieve the gloom of a woman's dull monotony. Some gallant of Musselburgh accomplished a gallant's work, and the woman saw before her exposure, guilt, disgrace.

She kept the secret of her shame. But time went by. The neighbours talked and surmised. Physical signs gave indications full of significance. Despair was eating out the woman's heart.

It was a custom of the Scottish Church that any woman who had been unfaithful should appear on three Sundays at the kirk to be publicly rebuked by the minister for her faults. Her shame was a spectacular thing, and her exposure was a tragic warning to the parish.

There is still the rebuke and the admonition to repentance in the Scottish churches, though these are administered less publicly and with a more tender regard for the feelings of the unhappy woman.

In dread of the ordeal, Margaret Dickson denied all the evidence that seemed so complete. A child was born. It disappeared. A body was found near by the place of her abode. She was tried for the murder of the child, convicted and sentenced to death. After her condemnation she behaved in the most penitent manner, admitted that she had been unfaithful to her husband, expressed contrition for her secrecy and denials, but explained it by the dread of the ordeal of the admonitions at the kirk. Till the end she denied that she had at any time done any violence to the child. She had been suddenly seized

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in childbirth, and a period of unconsciousness had supervened. She could say no more.

At the place of execution her behaviour was consistent with her former declarations. Face to face with death, she again avowed her total innocence of the crime, but made confession of her sorrow for her sins.

After execution the authorities gave the body to the relatives to be taken back for burial in her native place amongst her kinsfolk.

It was a procession of bitter grief that set out that morning from Edinburgh. About half-way on the road to Musselburgh the mourners stopped at Pepper Mill for refreshment. As they waited it was noticed that the coffin seemed to move, and, uncovering it, the woman in it was found to be alive. She was carefully attended to, and the following day had sufficiently recovered to walk back to her village.

Here was a woman executed and dead in the eye of the law, but a living fact in the sight of all men.

As the old chronicler writes: "By the Scottish law, which is in part founded on that of the Romans, a person against whom the judgment of the Court has been executed can suffer no more in future, but is thenceforward totally exculpated; and it is likewise held that the marriage is dissolved by the execution of the convicted party, which, indeed, is consistent with the ideas that common sense would form on such an occasion."

Mrs. Dickson, then, being convicted and executed, the King's advocate could prosecute her no further,

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but he filed a bill in the High Court of Justiciary against the sheriff for omitting to carry out the law.

The husband was freed from his marriage bonds, the woman was free to marry whom she might, and the gallant who had brought her down to the sorrow of the grave might have claimed her now in her resurrected life. At no point in this tragic history does his name appear.

Mrs. Dickson persisted in her affirmation of innocence. She confessed adultery, but she denied murder. Out of the sorrowful experiences that had wrought havoc for them both Margaret Dickson and her husband found deep sympathy and a mutual understanding, and within the walls of the old kirk they reunited their lives again in the sacrament of marriage, and in the ordered love of that sacred bond they found again a comradeship that had been shattered by the passion of a seducer who abandoned the woman in the bitter hour of her disaster and disgrace.

This is a story of resurrected love woven out of the eighteenth-century wars, but it has had its modern expression in many a village and city within very recent memory. There has not been present, perhaps, the ghastly scaffold or the terrible experience of resuscitation after execution. There have been present all the other elements of the tragic story of Margaret Dickson.

In one of our English cities in which I sat as Military Service (Civil Liabilities) Commissioner towards the end of the war I had a revelation of the magnanimity

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of a strong man's love. I never realized before to what depths human forgiveness could go, and to what height human compassion could rise. To me it will stand for all time as the epic of a white man's love.

In one of the lesser market towns he had built up a prosperous business that sent out its ramifications into many hamlets and villages of the county. He had made money, and the future seemed set fair both in domestic and commercial affairs. His wife dwelt with him and the children in a happy and contented domesticity. He was called to the Colours, and he went. During his training he kept in touch with business and home; but it became clear that the business could not be kept together, and he reckoned that as one of the prices that are paid for war. He did not reckon on a greater tragedy.

Near by the town was a training camp, and in it were colonial troops. The strain of war, the financial disturbances, the loneliness and uncertainty, caused strange mental and moral aberrations, and many women exhibited a side of their nature that was as surprising as it was unexpected. A friendship was formed between the soldier's wife and a colonial private. The friendship became an infatuation. She sold her husband's business and home and abandoned her children. The colonial was moved to a distant camp, and she left all and followed him. When he went overseas a wave of sanity seemed to return, and in spite of all that had happened she was forgiven.

Within a brief period another illicit friendship

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was formed, and it looked as if nothing could prevent final disaster. A child was born of the illicit passion.

The war was drawing to a close. Then there was the Armistice.

The demobilized soldier tried to gather up the threads of his disturbed and distressful life, and he offered his wife a complete absolution. The wreckage of his business lay about him, the wreckage of his wife's reputation, and the living presence of her unfaithfulness.

We talked of it, he and I. I expressed to him the wonderment of my admiration at the greatness of his magnanimity, and this was his reply :

“ War is a terrible affair, and it produces unthinkable things. We were lovers through long years, and she was distracted when I was sent to the Front. It was, perhaps, the loneliness and the anxiety that drove her to it. It is one of the costs of war. I have talked things over with her, and I believe that she has suffered more than I. We have begun again, and the past is dead. I shall never talk of it again.”

I watched him as he left my room, and I wondered what the hero was like who had fouled the home and reputation of the whitest man I had ever known.

Was his decision a wise one ? About its magnanimity almost divine in its quality there is no doubt, but what of its wisdom ? There are two possible issues. He may win her undying appreciation and affection, or he may earn her enduring contempt.

I have seen both issues result from superlative forgiveness, and the stories are very common in the Divorce Court.

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A little girl told her father, the other day, that he was not a man because he did not go about or stay out late at night like other men. I have listened to similar disapproval of excessive virtue by ladies older and more sophisticated. There is, perhaps, a touch of truth in the cynicism that virtue like calico wears well, but there is more romance in *crêpe de chine*.

I came across some "Advice to Husbands" in a torn fragment of a newspaper, which, unhappily, I cannot acknowledge, and it puts one aspect of marital relationship that deserves consideration, and, curiously enough, it coincides with the stock argument of a clubman of my acquaintance, who asserts that hysteria and kindred ailments are unknown amongst women in artisan areas by reason of the weighty deductions that a hob-nailed boot carries.

Husbands, here's the secret of connubial felicity.

Try this simple recipe, it's certain to succeed.

Unalloyed tranquillity and peaceful domesticity

Follow these instructions; the result is guaranteed.

If your wife should manifest a tendency toward snappiness,

Though your fond and doting spouse incline, at times, to scrappiness,

Married life will soon become a blissful dream of happiness.

Follow my instructions; the result is guaranteed.

Treat her rough, old scout! Treat her rough!

And you'll find she'll soon admit she's had enough.

If your wife be temperamental

It won't pay to treat her gentle,

For a woman's tears are frequently a bluff.

Treat her rough, old bean! Treat her rough!

They all scream, but still they like that caveman stuff.

It will change her whole demeanour,

She'll be happier and keener,

Now and then if you should bean her.

Treat her rough!

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I imagine the writer of the poem is speaking in a parable, and it may be that his figures of speech carry the rudiments of a philosophy. From internal evidence the poem appears to have an American origin, and popular notions here of the relative positions of husband and wife in America do not indicate that the doctrine of the poem is of general acceptance.

At all events there are experiences still that seem to justify more or less the dicta of St. Paul. And the problems of the widows with which he attempted to deal have persisted, unsolved, even unto this day.

Perhaps there is a clue to one aspect of truth in the glorious irrelevancy of the little girl who, in reply to the question, "What is the holy estate of matrimony?" told the Bishop that it is "an estate of sin and misery wherein we are prepared for another and a better world."

There was confusion in Eden, and in spite of the problems and perplexities occasioned by women every hour of the day since Time was born, they still weave the fairy worlds of men's dreams, and only in the comradeship of a faithful heart, in days of light and in days of shadow, can a man know a satisfaction and content that passeth understanding.

My attention has been directed to a most vital pronouncement by a distinguished American judge on the all-important matter of marital infelicity.

This is a subject that greatly concerns every divorce judge, stipendiary magistrate, and justice of the peace. Unhappily it is true that for not a few marriage is a

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misery, and inasmuch as marriage is the foundation of family life, anyone who can eliminate its jars and discomforts is justly entitled to the name of the "great reconciler." Such a one, apparently, is Judge Thomas Graham, of San Francisco, U.S.A.

The learned judge, it is reported, advises all women who wish to keep their husbands to have their hair bobbed forthwith. This importunity is indicative of its compelling importance.

It is alleged that bobbed hair was introduced into U.S.A. two years ago, and during those one hundred and four weeks the learned judge has not had a single application from a bobbed-haired wife for a divorce. On the other hand, many bobbed-haired women have appeared as the co-respondents that lured men from the paths of domesticity and virtue.

On such a grave matter even the wisest and most fastidious can only express pious opinions, and every opinion, however pious, is qualified by temperament and experience, but it is obvious that Judge Graham must have had something approaching phenomenal success, inasmuch as he is known in the U.S.A. as the "great reconciler," and his fame is built upon judgments in 1,500 divorce cases per annum in San Francisco.

The testimony of such high authority is entitled to the fullest respect, and those who are brought into daily contact with the misery consequent upon domestic infelicity in police and divorce courts will carefully weigh and consider the pronouncement of so high an authority, especially if it is not a tentative but a categorical pronouncement.

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The problem is, of course, a very old one. Indeed, indications of it are found in the Garden of Eden on the important issue of final responsibility for the apple incident. It occurs again in Abraham's menage, where an issue arose as to the ultimate responsibility for the Abraham-Hagar episode that resulted in the introduction of Ishmael as a bone of contention. The problem has persisted throughout the centuries in many forms and phases induced by causes as numerous as the hairs upon our head.

One lady the other day who was gently chided by her husband for extravagance retorted that the only thing that kept him alive was his dread of the funeral expenses. The learned American judge has discovered the way of avoidance for all such unseemly wrangling. Bobbed hair is the way to happy homes ! Beside this formula, Marconi's discovery, insulin, submarines and aeroplanes are irrelevancies, because the family is the oldest of all human institutions.

When we come to consider the implications of the formula, it is evident that the considered judgment of the learned judge cannot be lightly dismissed. They are as follow :

I. There is a persistence, actual or imaginary, of physical charm.

The learned judge has not indicated whether there is a physiological reaction of vital forces that beautifies the woman, or whether the artistic effect is such as to react, psychologically, on the man. There is, besides, an economic aspect of the achievement. It

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eliminates all costly cosmetics—skin-foods, hair-dyes, powders of various hues.

II. Mental affinities are created, re-created, and maintained.

It is a well-established fact that marital unhappiness is largely due to incompatibility of temperament, mental as well as physical. There is a conflict of tastes in art, literature, sociology, psychology, the latest dances, and the essentials of a Jazz band. I have known Mr. Charles Chaplin, who, I understand, is temperamental, to cause marital jars. To the husband Mr. Chaplin is an exhilaration, to the wife he is a bore, or vice versa. One can easily visualize the occurrence.

After dinner, husband and wife start out for the kinema. They see the announcement on the posters of the appearance of Mr. Chaplin. The husband is jubilant, the wife upset, or vice versa. There are all the elements of a first-class domestic disturbance. Allegations of vulgarity, insinuations of common breeding, suggestions that his great-aunt married a greengrocer are flung about. Then the husband suggests that the wife is a good judge of vulgarity seeing that her uncle travels for sewing-machines. She threatens to go back to mother and he resolves to commit suicide.

Bobbed hair will cure all this.

III. Domestic felicity necessarily involves the complete elimination of all financial disputes.

It is not indicated whether this results from a lessening of the wife's demands or an increasing of the husband's supplies. Nor is this important. Husband

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and wife are *ad idem*. It would seem to work automatically. As the bonus fell the wife would expect less, and as overtime increased it would be spontaneously declared to the satisfaction of both.

Apparently no section of matrimonial life is unaffected. Mothers-in-law, lodgers, washing-day, bank holidays are all within the purview of this modern alchemy.

All this for two shillings, which is, I understand, the price of an artistic "bob." It is a ridiculous figure, and in order to add to its true mathematical dignity it should be paid for in German marks.

In my opinion this is the greatest contribution America has made to European civilization. If it is well founded it will achieve no less for the peace of mankind than her contributions of men and material 1914-1918. Indeed, it is sufficient compensation for the millions we are paying her for her share in making the world safe for democracy.

And a world safe for matrimony has about it a touch of actuality that can never attach to mere international problems. Marriage is no matter of fourteen points; it has as many points as the hairs of our head.

Europe has at last been recompensed for the discovery of Columbus.

The only difficulty that I foresee is the difficulty of persuading women to adopt the learned judge's advice, because bobbing the hair may be regarded as a public confession of marital failure. After all, what women most esteem is the opinion of the neighbours.

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The only way is a doctor's certificate that ill-health demands the "bob."

I notice, too, that the surgeons of the San Francisco Emergency Hospital, U.S.A., declare that no "bobbed hair" girl has committed suicide.

This fact seems to raise another sex problem, because it was after a "bob" that Samson committed suicide. How full of contradictions life is !

CHAPTER XIII

THE DRAMA OF A MURDER TRIAL

THE intensest moments that I have lived, in a career that has known both variation and vicissitude, are associated with the drama of murder trials. Only the most superficial can watch that drama without strange searchings of heart and blind efforts to understand the problem of human existence. To what end are there hidden in the human heart impulses of hate and passion that drive men and women into such dreadful misdeeds? Does some redemption lie in those long days and weeks of uncertainty and anguish, crowded with alternating hope and despair, that lie between the arrest and the execution? What anchorage is there to hold men to sanity as they watch through sleepless nights for the dawn that is only a prelude to fitful and fevered dreams?

There is some fascination about murder that holds the popular imagination. Perhaps it is its association with Death. It brings death and leaves the impress of death upon the mind and memory, and it finds in death its lawful atonement.

Men visualize vividly all the happenings. The

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wakeful warders, the unbroken comradeship, the desolation of the last departure from amongst the living.

There is a strange nobility about despair, and something that is akin to bravery. I have often wondered at it. It seems to lift men to heights above their fellows and they seem to walk with gods. I have sat by the bedside of those anointed unto death, and they were crowned with some aureola that was visible and almost tangible.

And in the depths of despair there must be found consolations and consecrations unknown to those who walk in happier ways.

A condemned cell is a holy place, for all great grief is holy and every man with the sweat of death upon his brow is going to his Golgotha carrying his lonely cross, and at times he falls beneath the weight of its sin and shame. Our death penalty is terrible in its simplicity. There is about it no grandeur, no display. It is as simple as death itself. Just an oaken beam, a length of hempen rope and a hole in mother earth. Then quick-lime and solitude and the unbroken, untroubled sleep. But in preparation for it a man misses all those tender preludes that Nature gives when she is beckoning. A weary body, a tired brain, a longing for rest and quietness. The only solace that the man within the prison walls can know must be some sublime consolation that can soothe the responsive brain of the healthy.

Three weeks of thinking. Three weeks of anguish

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and remorse. Three weeks of bitter repentance. Three weeks of tortured sleep.

Are those measured weeks the expression of some profound discovery? Did some soul find in their desolation the utter need of some friendship, some comradeship, some living presence, and in his despair, reaching out his hands of sorrow, did he find some answering touch to the greatness of his necessities? Each day takes the fevered world of men and things farther away, each day brings him closer to that World that lies beyond the mystery of Death.

Ah! perhaps Death comes in the guise of a great friendship and as a great deliverance. One who had learnt to hold life cheaply wrote words that may give a clue to the roadway upon which Death's pilgrims go :

“There is now no condemnation to them who walk not after the flesh, but after the spirit.”

The English Criminal Law watches with great concern those upon whom may fall the shadows of the gallows. It accepts no plea of guilty lest some soul battered by misfortune and despair or impelled by some kink in brain or body should choose the plea as an avenue of escape from life.

The judge watches that all the evidence is admissible, that no circumstance or report is submitted to the jury that is unfair to the accused.

But it is to the jury of twelve of his fellow citizens that the accused is entrusted, and it is they who must

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be satisfied that he is guilty of shedding blood. By them are spoken the words of doom.

* * * * *

Blood has been spilt ! In some lonely lane, overshadowed by night and silence, a human soul was brought face to face with death. He had been lured into the solitude or had been passing on his lawful way. Suddenly death faces him. There is no escape—the cry of dread is silenced. Horror, anguish, fear, despair. At last the panting dies away, and a bruised, disfigured body remains. Or is it a woman ? Her virtue is attacked. In some quiet by-way suddenly the even tenor of her life is broken. The unexpected, the terrible, the unthought-of happens. Her screams die away across the silence of the moorlands. A woman has plumbed the depths of anguish and her life oozes out upon the brown bosom of mother earth.

The living leaves the dead, but memory abides. The screams cannot be silenced. The look, the form, the pitiful appeal—these keep coming and going before the eyes. It is an unceasing torture. And the law is looking for the murderer. He reads into every sentence an allusion to the deed. He looks into the eyes of every stranger trying to read how much he suspects or knows. He starts at every footfall. And at night the stopping of a wayfarer by his window makes a cold sweat break out upon his body. In dreadful crimes the wrong-doer is a duality. The one man looks at the other. He condemns him, he lashes him with the fury of a bitter

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invective, but he pities him with an unfathomable sorrow. He knows the man he was and the man he is, and he understands the measure of his torture. There is rest neither by day nor by night. And there is no sleep.

Somehow the police come. He sees the blue cloth and the helmet and the shining Royal Arms, and there is the queer odour that is associated with the uniform of the police. It is the smell of terror which only comes as one of the penalties of guilt, just like sweat and blood and shaking limbs. There are many inquiries and many preliminaries.

At last the prisoner comes to the last inquiry before twelve of his countrymen. He is between two warders, and there are relays of police about the place. He is alone. Everybody about him is strange. The dock is strange. The details of the court fascinate him. Yonder is the judge in ermine and crimson and with the horsehair wig, and above him are emblazoned the Royal Arms. The light shines in by the window at the back and slants across the dock. The seats behind are crowded with strangers, and the galleries, too; and ever so far back strangers and strangers. And people are always coming and going. Everybody seems free to come and go; but he must always remain.

Each detail is noticed.

* * * * *

Suddenly: "Gentlemen of the jury, you are sworn." A dreadful sensation runs through the prisoner. His heart throbs, his stomach is borne down

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with a dreadful heaviness. His mouth grows parched and he tries to lick his lips with a dry tongue, but his mouth is a furnace.

“Prisoner at the Bar, you are charged with that you feloniously did kill and slay X.Y.Z. with malice aforethought. How say you: Are you Guilty or Not Guilty?”

The prisoner is given in charge to the jury. Those twelve men are the arbiters of Fate. They are the ministers of life or death.

All the dramatic factors in a murder trial are the fruition of the emotions and the imagination. There is no dramatic setting and there are no stage effects. The court-house is as unadorned as a Non-conformist chapel. The only touch of colour is in the red judge and the uniformity of counsels' grey wigs and black robes. And there is always the blue uniform of the police.

In quiet, even tones comes the opening of the case for the prosecution. It is a recital of the facts of the case as alleged by the Crown against the accused. Piece by piece the jury are told of the crime, what was done and where, what was seen and by whom, and what was found. The lonely man flanked by warders listens to the recital.

All through the long hours it goes on. It rises and falls across the court-house like some terrible litany. He is led back to the evil day of the evil deed. He anticipates each sentence as it falls from the cold lips of counsel. In cold blood he listens to the deed that he did in the frenzy of his lust. Now and then

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some noise from the great outer world steals across the court. Now it is a newsboy crying the latest news—news of a world that seems so very far away. Now it is the hoot of a motor-bus passing; now it is the laughter of some joyous passer-by who knows nothing of the happenings within this house of tragedy.

Each noise stirs some association of happiness and freedom. The strains of an old song begin to sound within his memory. He thinks of things and people and friends and home. With a jerk he comes back. He is fighting Death!

Yes; it is really he! He is in this place. He looks at the warders to reassure himself. And then he looks at the impassive figure of Justice in crimson and white. The recital goes on, and amidst it all the surgings of thoughts, emotions, longings, dreads, hopes, prayers. Suddenly counsel makes his submission to the jury that the evidence is such that it will be their duty to say that the prisoner at the bar is guilty of murder.

The first witness is called. It may only be to produce a map or a plan or a photograph, and to identify the place of the murder. Again the place becomes visible to the prisoner. He is back again at that fateful place on that fateful day. Again he sees his victim; again all the incidents become alive and torture him. Always he is brought back.

Life is terrible in its pitiless relentlessness. He wants to go away—anywhere. Can't life forget and forgive? The prisoner grows weary and he hides his tired eyes behind his restless hands. But another

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witness is called. Something is said that weaves a little more; and slowly, inevitably the web of evidence is spun.

The procession of witnesses goes on. They all talk about the same thing—the murder and himself. He seems to be an obsession with the world. It beats like a hammer on his heart. His brain is on fire. Every nerve is worn and torn and weary. Oh, not to be! Oh, never to have been! Everything seems to have been seen. The eyes of God were watching—the stars were watching. Some conglomeration of facts and happenings and people conspired together against him. He was seen all the time.

At last the time comes for his defence. He decides to tell the story that will prove his innocence. Oh, he must win! He has suffered enough for any atonement. This is his first step towards freedom. And he leaves the dock for the witness-box. But the warders come with him. They wait beside him—they are waiting for him; he is never alone. They watch him by day and they watch him by night. He wants to be alone, but even here they are close by.

His counsel asks him a question, and he answers it—and another. And yet another. He tells the story that he thinks must establish his innocence, and at last his counsel sits down. He turns to go away, but he is detained a little longer.

The other counsel wants to ask him questions. Everything he said before was noted down. Nothing was missed. Every word was noted and weighed,

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every hesitancy, every confusion and contradiction. He is asked to explain more ; in desperation, he explains. Ah, that was wrong ! He had said something different a moment ago. The stories don't agree ; they can't both be true. He tries to explain again. Everything is confused, mixed up, but he is very weary. He grows limp with weariness. The lines grow deeper and deeper in the grey face.

At last counsel sits down, and a man worn out in the terrible conflict drags his weary limbs back into the dock.

The afternoon is slowly wearing into the evening. The daylight dies away and the electric lamps are lit. They throw a queer yellow haze about the court-house.

The prisoner has aged since the morning, he has shrivelled up. But still they keep him.

The judge sums up the evidence—the story of the prosecution, the story of the prisoner. In cold, impassive, passionless tones each fact is put in true relation to every other fact. Now and then he hesitates about a word. Too much might be read into this word or that, and he wants the word that is colourless.

Bit by bit the evidence is put together, and line by line the stories of the Crown and the prisoner are compared and put in contrast. This conflict is compared with that, and this harmony with that. And there occurs and recurs the warning of the judge : “ Juries ought to act upon the evidence. If upon a careful survey of the facts any reasonable

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doubt assail your mind, the prisoner is entitled to go free. If it tells you that the guilt of the prisoner is reasonably proved, then the law and the oath which you have taken alike demand that you should act with firmness and courage."

The day wears on. The summing-up of the evidence is drawing to a close.

"My duty is done. Yours remains yet to be fulfilled, and I pray most earnestly that you may be guided to the deliverance of a just and righteous verdict."

The jury file out one by one into the room behind to weigh the evidence, to consider the verdict. The prisoner goes down to the cells below. He and his memories, and the warders. The judge retires to his room to await the decision of the jury.

The waiting court is crowded, and about it there is a strange hush. Men and women here and there are weighing up their lives, and the prisoner below the dock is not the only man with memories.

The grave gives up its dead to many hidden in those crowded benches. There is a movement started somewhere, somehow.

The judge comes back. A door opens and the jury return one by one. Each man has written on his face the verdict that he brings. Those twelve men have aged too. Their faces are grey and lined and set. They take their seats.

The Clerk of Arraignment: "Gentlemen of the jury are you agreed upon your verdict?"

The Foreman of the Jury: "We are."

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The Clerk of Arraignment : " Do you find the prisoner at the bar guilty or not guilty of wilful murder ? "

The prisoner is terrible to see. His heart is wildly pumping the blood to feed the nerves of a stricken body, his ears are singing. His eyes are bloodshot. He is waiting for the word. . . .

Foreman of the Jury : " Guilty ! "

The air gyrates. The court gyrates. Listen ! There is the tocsin of death. One sees death. One smells death. This is a sepulchre.

In a moment or two things grow steadier. The judge begins to speak—someone has put the little square of black upon his head.

" Prisoner at the bar, this careful trial is now ended. The irrevocable decision has now been given. The jury have found you guilty of the crime of murder. In your hungry lust for gold you had no pity upon the victim whom you slew, and it is only just that the Nemesis of the law should overtake the author of the crime.

" The scales of justice are now balanced by the verdict which your fellows have pronounced : the punishment is death. I do not presume to judge you. I am nothing but the minister of the law, and in passing sentence I only do that duty which the law commands. That sentence is that you be taken from hence to the place from whence you came, and from thence to a place of execution, and that you be there hanged by the neck until you be dead, and that your body be afterwards buried within the precincts of the prison in which you have been last confined after your con-

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viction, and may God Almighty have mercy upon your soul.”*

The prisoner goes down the steps into the cells below ; the first stage of his journey to death. And as we pass into the fresh air of a free world there comes stealing across the memory the invocation of an old wise man : “ Lord, teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom.”

* Lord Coleridge.

CHAPTER XIV

LONDON'S STRANGERS

I THINK the reputation that London has achieved of indifference to strangers is based on the expectations and experiences of local magnates who have discovered that their fame and reputation have not reached to the Metropolis. This is one of the glorious rewards of showing London to personages from the Provinces. The Mayor of Tyndale or the Chairman of the Alwark Urban District Council learns with undisguised surprise that London seldom knows the names of the Mayors of her own Boroughs, and Aldermen of the Metropolis are counted by scores upon scores. Even the Lord Mayor of the City is known to few. At an important City dinner not so long ago one of the guests asked his neighbour who was Lord Mayor. There was some hesitancy in the answer, and a City Alderman suggested sarcastically that it was Sir Richard Whittington.

The neighbour replied to the stranger, "He is only pulling your leg. The present Lord Mayor is X.Y.Z."—mentioning the name of a distinguished ex-Lord Mayor long dead.

London has an effective way of revealing human

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values, and the mighty men from obscure towns and villages learn the virtue of humility. It is an incidence of life.

The prosperous tradesman, the leading consultant, the solicitor and intimate of the County families, pass and repass in street and restaurant and music-hall. Their obscurity is appalling, their insignificance is terrible to endure.

They left their town or village and their departure was an event. Everybody on the platform took notice of them. The station-master saw to their comfort and the porters competed for the honour of handling the luggage, and the tip.

But King's Cross and Paddington are in dramatic contrast. The porters ignore them. The station-master, sometimes a striking person in a silk-hat, passes them by, completely oblivious of their presence. The taxi-man is sardonic and the lady at the hotel counter looks at them as if they were an obtrusion on London. Even the head-waiter is not impressed, and the under-waiter is, to put it mildly, dubious.

London welcomes the egotist with a cold douche. She is intolerant of the pompous, and cruel in her stare of indifference to the petty vanities of life. There is about London something of the primordial realism of a wilderness. She is twenty-nine cities woven into one. She is a thousand parishes interlinked and interwoven. Only Justices' Clerks and curious Guardians of the Poor know where one begins and another ends. There are hiding-places that are under-worlds ;

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there are oases and sandy deserts. There is a tangled undergrowth of hidden, secret things and people.

On the outskirts there are settlements of the Scottish or the Jewish or the complex confusions of English counties, but London keeps reaching out farther and farther towards the green fields, and she gathers those who once were immigrants into the fold and charm of her citizenship.

With seven millions of souls and 500,000 acres of houses and shops and docks, and the problems of food and raiment, housing and health, ships and merchandise, it is easy for London to forget that the Mayor and Mayoress of Tyndale have come to town, and that the Chairman of the Alwark Urban District Council is here to study the latest methods of the Metropolitan Fire Brigade.

London does not mean to be discourteous, only she is used to celebrities. She frequently sees even Members of Parliament in lounge suits or eating lunch with a plated knife and fork. At Piccadilly Circus or in the Haymarket she sees a distinguished Admiral or General getting his hair shampooed, and occasionally on the golf course she meets with world-renowned preachers both of the Establishment and Nonconformity. Beauties of the ballet are sometimes on the river by Molesey Lock, and the creators of creations in tulle, crêpe de chine and fur pass and repass by Tagg's Island in launches caparisoned and fit for Cleopatra.

Moreover, London is discreet. That is one of

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the virtues of a dense and scattered population. It gives opportunities of being temporarily lost, and its treasure-houses of Art and Antiquities offer acceptable and justifiable excuse for unexplainable hours and forgotten social obligations. And local celebrities may enjoy the delights of Metropolitan obscurity as a contrast to the limelight of their local publicity. Nothing creates surprise. London has long lost that capacity, and even Mayors or Aldermen dependent on the more stable perambulations of Councillors or Town Clerks evoke neither mirth nor astonishment. A curate has been seen to smoke a cigarette in Leicester Square.

The most characteristic quality of London is her toleration. It operates in faiths, manners and political traditions and associations. It accepts Mr. Asquith, Mr. Lloyd George, Mr. Bonar Law and Mr. Baldwin with an equal equanimity, and forgets them with unequivocal celerity. And Sir Robert Horne is no less memorable as a dancer than as ex-Chancellor of the Exchequer.

Even explosive appreciations of the quality of soup at the Cecil or Savoy are taken as in the nature of the normal and the expected.

Being tolerant London is reticent, and some judge reticence as suspicion. Reticence and suspicion are different *in esse*. The former is a negative, the latter a positive quality. And it is the people who have neither that become the victims of the most hoary of ancient frauds. With the Spring invasion from Western worlds the hoary confidence trick

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blooms and blossoms like the rose. And it occurs and recurs with the unfailing certainty of the seasons.

It has been suggested that Americans, especially, fall a victim to these lures and wiles because of their intimate familiarity with and attachment to the Holy Scriptures.

A hasty assumption that the apostolic injunction applied to their hosts and that the apostolic justification alluded to them leads to the superlative acts of faith. For is it not written in the Epistle to the Hebrews, "Be not forgetful to entertain strangers, for thereby some have entertained angels unawares" ? This is the Credo of the crooks.

Americans lacking in reticence on the liners have no cause to complain that they have been lacking in friends on the trains. And friends wait for them at Waterloo, at hotels and in the purlieus of the American Consulate. They are accosted at every place of interest, and the ordered details of their European trip are known. It is flattering to be recognized four thousand miles from the Middle West, and it is a tribute to one's municipal or commercial success to find that its details are known and talked about in an old Continent. To challenge the bona fides of even a casual acquaintance in such circumstances is to confess oneself inexperienced and untravelled. And admission of inexperience is not a characteristic of youth either in nature or in nationality. Wisdom must be bought, and it is bought

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sometimes amidst the hilarious laughter of old criminals who appreciate the blend of egotism and faith that provides them with a life without labour, and the interesting enterprise of pitting their experience against the wisdom of the wise.

It is perhaps an inaccurate assumption that London's inhabitants and institutions are suffering from senile decay. Health and vigour are not measured in terms of years, and knowledge is a relative term. The graphic description of an occurrence is not necessarily a discovery, and every rule or experience is not universal in its application. Dogmatism is always amusing to the patient, and a challenge issued to a certainty is refreshing.

I listened to a gentleman in a Ford car and horn spectacles "guessing" that the map was wrong when he struck a wrong turning in Kingston-on-Thames. He argued the affair with an officer of the Metropolitan Police. It never occurred to him that either he or the Ford could go wrong. That, I understand, is an American characteristic, individually, nationally, internationally and mechanically.

He left the issue an open one as he got his automobile across the tram-lines, and his parting words to the policeman were, "Wall! officer, I'll take your word, but I guess I am not convinced." The officer smiled the smile of a great toleration.

All this is just an expression of London's adaptation. She ministers to the needs of her strangers, and those who minister reap their exceeding great reward.

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Vanity and self-esteem are as much entitled to their hours of expansion and exhilaration as are the artistic emotions that find refreshment in drama and art, or the feelings of hunger and thirst that are satisfied at the Ritz or Lockhart's.

"The Cheshire Cheese" would have been demolished by a people less considerate of strangers. We retain our shrines so that our descendants and those with whom they intermarry may return to the fountains of their institutions and traditions. Literary associations linked on to pigeon-pie contain the recipe of a successful lunch. And they are the incentive to many a crowded pilgrimage.

There is no stranger that is unknown to London. Little strangers come from the Back o' Beyond. Some are welcomed with warm embraces, and some are abandoned by railway stations or by the wet banks of the setting tide. In Great Ormond Street and by Whitechapel there are tall buildings into which the little strangers come, and down by Barkingside there are fields and gardens. All England sends the lost and the unwanted, and in a ministry of women's love they find a warmth and tenderness that gives some clue to the things that they have missed.

In Foundling Hospitals and in schools lads and girls learn discipline and wisdom shielded from the blows of adversity and want.

Polytechnics and institutions and settlements spring up in the crowded populous places, so that something

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of the loneliness of life may be taken away and the days made rich in friendship and happy associations.

Placards stand in front of churches and chapels almost blatantly proclaiming their passionate desire to give to the wayfarer the atmosphere of domesticity and home.

There is about London an intense appreciation of her magnitude and depth and mystery. The individual is easily lost sight of and the stranger can be readily forgotten. And most of us who came to her ever so long ago recall the sense of desolation that swept over our hearts that were fresh from the intimacy and affections of hamlets and smaller cities. Human life is gregarious, and youth longs for the society of youth. The streets are full of opportunities of chance acquaintanceship, and it is not always ignoble. I have talked at midnight with the cab-runners of other days, and I have heard in whispers the secret things of a drab life in the blaze of the lights at the —.

Wreckage ! But much more.

Outcast ! But richer by far.

On a wet night, with an empty stomach, the minds of men and women touch strange depths and weave strange philosophies. They stare wide-eyed into London's glorious sky and they think and do unthinkable things. But they suffer. I think, perhaps, they atone. Those experiences cannot be futile and without achievement. The Galilean philosopher saw in them a great significance, and once he uttered

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memorable words of a strange suggestiveness :
"Publicans and harlots go into the Kingdom of Heaven before you."

It is perhaps to the wreckage of manhood and womanhood that London is most tender, for she offers to them the Sanctuary of obscurity. And in days of shame and sorrow it is that we long for the most.

Like some hurt animal we search for complete solitude to heal our wounds and to hide our shame.

And London asks no questions. She has the reticence of a great compassion.

At times we meet men who were friends in other days and whose most ardent wish is that the past should be a graveyard. By their attitude and approach they beseech us to forget, and it is kindest to pass them by.

At Charing Cross I saw one standing by the corner of Craven Street. He had been washed by the tides of Fate from a northern city and he was a lost man. At one time he was a prominent stock-broker, but something happened and the Law said that it was fraud, and so he went to gaol.

To disturb him now is to add to his sorrow ; to speak to him is to make an agony of his shame. His heart is dead, and he does not want it touched to life by the finger of a friendship that he has striven to forget. From Notting Dale to Bow, London offers hiding-places for those who have memories to hide. London covers as with a cloud all iniquities and transgressions. She gives to broken men the comradeship

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of broken men, and lost women find, too, the consolations of companionship.

These talk, at times, in their sleep, and tell strange tales of old and happier days, but in the morning each man knows that each life carries the baptism of its own sorrow. And it is best to forget. And dead men tell no tales.

Perhaps the tenderest ministry of London to the many strangers within her gates is the ministry that she gives to the lost children of men.

And this, I know, that if in the puzzling maze of life I one day lost my way, I should hasten back to her shadowy by-ways, knowing that she would hush me to quietness of spirit because of the greatness of her humanity; for, her forgiveness is even unto the uttermost.

This temper of London has reacted on political and international affairs and set its seal upon treaties and ententes, for it is a temper of mutuality and understanding, and in its atmosphere of toleration the disruptive forces die. The spirit of conciliation and concession is of the essence of London. Seven millions of people could not live and move and have their being together without that spirit. A bus queue at Oxford Circus is a manifestation of it, and Aldgate East on a Thursday morning is a challenge and demonstration to the sceptical. London has the quality of an unfailing understanding. She is adaptable to moods, responsive to points of view and easily placated.

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The assertion "Yes! we have no bananas" will put ten thousand people in that spirit of charity that "beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things, is not easily provoked."

The achievement of a spiritual result by a music-hall absurdity. London never goes off at the deep end. Life has too many points of view, and London has all those points of view. Even a police strike is accepted as a gorgeous joke. Peace officers on strike defying the law that they want others to observe! London laughs at the illogical things of the world, and they are very many. But she can show a great reticence and a great regard towards the sorrows of those that hate her. London has bared the head in token of sympathy with those who have reviled her.

Perhaps no finer display of this intense humanity of London has been witnessed than in the dark days of Ireland's unrest immediately preceding the Treaty. The Lord Mayor of Cork was interned in Brixton Gaol and he died within the precincts of this English prison. His body was conveyed to Euston, and the procession of mourners carried emblems of their revolt. London forgot every challenge in the presence of Death and remembered only the sorrow of the weeping woman whose heart was desolate by reason of her husband's love for Ireland. This was an occurrence impossible in any other city. It could not have happened in Dublin or Paris, in Berlin or Rome or Moscow. And it is more than a fancy of mine that these characteristic qualities of the Metro-

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polis were factors that made for the Irish Peace. It is current history that Mr. Griffiths and Mr. Michael Collins came to the conferences with a full share of Celtic suspicion. Every courtesy was queried and every concession looked at askance. Ireland had an intimate acquaintanceship with English deals before, and at every step the bona fides were analysed and tested.

Every day London was manifesting its sympathy with the problems and distractions of the Irish people. Good-will abounded everywhere. Every advance towards an understanding was welcomed. The English people were anxiously searching for a way out of the age-long distrusts and suspicions. They went far, but what was more important they won, for the first time, the unwavering faith of the chiefs of the Irish delegation.

Towards the end Mr. Griffiths and Mr. Collins never doubted, and they kept the faith.

On the occasion of their last visit to London, on the eve of their journey to home and death, they discussed with a company of their countrymen in London a celebration of the Peace at which all the signatories to the Treaty might be present.

They knew the magnitude of their task and the many dangers that beset their path, but it was their clearly-expressed desire that the Irishmen in London should pay tribute to the magnanimity, courage and honour of the Earl of Birkenhead and Mr. Austen Chamberlain. Whether for weal or woe, the pioneer work in the establishment of the new relationship

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with Southern Ireland was theirs. But it was amongst the rank and file of London that Griffiths and Collins saw the real temper of the English people, and, I think, it was in that contact that they found the answering faith that impelled them to the Great Adventure.

CHAPTER XV

LONDON'S PASSERS-BY

MY only hobby is wandering in London, and I need no other. In it there is exhilaration for mind and body, and at times there are occurrences that are a stimulus to the soul. The art of London is not hidden within four walls, and its drama is not presented over yellow footlights. The cinema is not the home of humour, nor are the churches the sole habitations of the spiritual life. The initiated know that churches, theatres and galleries are abodes for the spiritually and the artistically blind—for those who, having eyes see not, and having ears do not hear. They are in the same category as artificial foods for infants and invalids, and their justification lies in the need of them.

The dramas of London's streets are so varied and manifold that every emotion is stirred, and the cast of every drama is made up of actors and actresses chosen by life itself for the part they play so brilliantly. Here, there is no favouritism, and no intervention by actor-managers. There is no puffing by the Press; there is no manipulation by the great artists of advertising. This is life staged by Nature.

London's streets, too, are an expression of the

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highest art. From Mayfair to Millwall and from Brixton to Walham Green. The early morning with its baptism of freshness like wet dew and market carts lumbering behind tired horses wandering through Leadenhall Street to Essex lanes and homesteads.

Piccadilly in the twilight with its walls of coloured fire and the throbbing traffic and the hurried exodus of tired girls.

And those who peer deep into the destiny of the race find on all hands problems with which to exercise their faith.

Street-preachers fling their eloquence against the heedless passers-by and warn them of judgments to come. The black spectre of Death is paraded in Leicester Square hard by its temples of harlotry. There are little groups of people who listen to the gospel, and it may be that some responsive note is kindled in hearts that are without hope and without God.

Problems of temptation and sin. Problems of repentance and redemption. Problems of hunger and want and homelessness.

And at midnight the debris of humanity is scattered on doorsteps and gutterways—drab and dirty and despondent. There are oases of green fields and quiet waters beside which we may walk. And those who love solitude can find it not far from the fevered restlessness

Wandering in London is cheaper than golf though no less exhilarating, and it has the further advantage that it needs neither “plus fours” nor the affectations

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of a torrid vocabulary. For most, golf is not a mania ; it is a pretended enthusiasm, and the man in "Acacia Villa" affects it because the man in "The Oaks" has driven him to it in self-defence. Unless he plays he is reduced to silence in suburban company, and he has no conversation fit for the man he meets in the train. Golf is one expression of middle age's regret for the virtues of youth. The Scotsman who devoted his best years to discipline and effort finds in golf an opportunity of pretending that he was always a dare-devil and an athlete, and had within him the potentialities of an Oxford Blue. I am not sure that there is not as much assumed vice as there is assumed virtue, and hypocrisy has relation to both.

There is a friend of mine whose ambition is to impress people that he is a near kinsman of Mephistopheles. "Last night" is always a hectic night. To-night he is temperate in all things, but to-morrow night he will impress people that "last night" was a blazer. His hectic nights are usually woven out of one small whisky and three large "Pollys." The formula does not sound full of hectic possibilities, but it spares him from the category of the total abstainer and ensures discretion.

Like golf, all this behaviour is camouflaged egotism. It is a protest against obscurity. For the same reason, half-intoxicated sailors in East London take control of traffic and compete with the police constable on duty at Gardiner's Corner. The exhilaration of Cup-tie matches and Boat-race day is only an expression of egotism, and most of the charges of disorderly

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behaviour have been induced less by intoxicating liquor than by the compulsion of the Ego. A night in the cells begets native modesty and a more accurate appreciation of intellectual and physical powers. There was more than wit in the comment of a colleague who, when a diminutive man was charged with obstructing a burly police sergeant in the course of his duty by persistently challenging him to fight, asked if the officer did not propose to charge him with "Attempting to commit suicide!" The little man had merely taken on a cargo of Dutch courage. The courage had evaporated by midnight, and a period of humiliation and repentance supervened. There is no gallery in a police cell to which the resolute can play.

I was talking the other day to a man of humble beginnings upon whom Fortune had smiled; it was pathetic to see his assumed interest in the cricket match Eton *v.* Harrow. The deliberation with which he avoided the pitfall of "Heaton *v.* 'Arrow" was a demonstration of his resolve to live up to the level of the Schools. To put the hall-mark of success upon his career, he avoided soap in order to talk sport.

The truth is that most men's hobbies are a pure affectation. They are dictated as much by fashion as are jumpers or camisoles. There are well-defined interests for gentlemen, and these every gentleman pursues. Once golf becomes democratic it is doomed.

"London" became my hobby more than a quarter of a century ago, and my hobby has become a habit of life. Strangely enough, I came to London to pursue studies

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more or less profound, including, *inter alia*, Theology and Philosophy, and I sat at the feet of professors more or less distinguished in their own departments of knowledge. One became familiar with the historic and modern theories of sin and with all the confused doctrines of atonement and redemption. How philosophic they were in their splendid detachment from life and in their avoidance of impact with the world of actualities ! One wandered from the seclusion of the class-room and the academic angle of vision into the pulsing of a fevered life. The Gnostic heresy became humorous, and the conflict between Consubstantiation and Transubstantiation seemed to resolve itself into tweedledum, tweedledee. As the theologians and doctrinaires spun their cobwebs and split the hairs of the shades of meanings of a Greek noun or a Hebrew verb, one watched across the black sky, and the teeming twinkling stars stared in an untroubled serenity at the endless, restless mass of human life. There was an eternal searching for some harmonious relationship with self and with the world. That searching never ceased. Men were searching in the City by day and in the West End by night ; they were searching in counting-houses, in restaurants and in brothels. They were seeking some avenues that would lead them to the Sun, in drink, in money, in honours and in scholarship. Where is the *via vitæ* ? This is the testing-place for all philosophies and all theories of Sin and Redemption, of God and Christ and Holy Ghost. The certitudes of the class-room grew into the doubts of the streets ; and gnosticism

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was transposed into agnosticism upon the highways. Dogmatics failed in the empyrics of the world. Philosophy is an attempt to generalize experiences and theology an attempt to individualize God. The confusions and conflicts of both are complete. And yet in the confusion there are mystical points of contact, perhaps there is even unity of faith. It seems clear that it was the political implications that made religious passions so bitter. Acts of Uniformity and Test Acts had more relation to politics than to religion. Freedom is the atmosphere of faith.

A bus top became a watch-tower. The music-halls were promenades of passion. The streets were exhibitions of wealth and vagrancy, health and deformity, and a restlessness that knew no surcease. To know London is to become acquainted with life. Some speak as if life were only found in the purlieus of the demi-monde, but this is merely flippancy.

There is a half-world of intense life, with its own ideals and tests of value, with its own code of honour and frown of disapproval. It is a curious reflection that those ideals of friendship and honour have a striking resemblance to the essentials that apply amongst the virtuous. De Quincey's discovery of a harlot's heart and pity has no claim to uniqueness, and their code of honour would put to shame the more reputable honour of respectable women who pass through the Gehenna of the Divorce Court.

A girl who has been false to a moral law becomes a social leper; a woman of repute is false to the same

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moral law and the Divorce Court pronounces a decree of freedom, though she be respondent and her sins be red like crimson. Respectability has little relation to morality, and money can cover a multitude of sins. Lack of money, not lack of virtue, drives many girls to the streets, and there are some to whom the calling is repulsive, but who dare not pay the cost that redemption demands.

Others sin as they sin. They sell what others give, but the violation of the moral law is no more grave. It is the impecunious that bear the stigma and the shame. And youth must be served !

The half-world is a world of tears and regrets. Its gaiety is only a pretence and its laughter and repartee are part of the stock-in-trade of the vendors of the flesh. Its personnel is as varied in culture, class and character as is that of any company of women. Wives who thoughtlessly embarked upon an illicit adventure, girls who were deceived by the glamour of nature and swooned into the ranks of the fallen, the heiresses of the vicious who seemed predestined to the streets from their mother's womb. What perplexity and complexity ! What sorrowful gaiety ! What unutterable horrors and depravity ! It is a welter of weakness, betrayed trust, illusion, delusion and shame.

The wash of London's " Half-world " sweeps about the Metropolitan Police Courts and what is reputed gaiety and romance looks strangely bizarre when it is standing in the dock, and is called by the unpoetical names that the Criminal Law assumes.

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I have talked with many passers-by, and one's heart grows young in contact with those whom time has not aged and whose ideals burn brightly through long years of disappointment and ridicule. London is very rich in dreamers, whose eyes never see the drabness and failure, but who are always waiting for some paraclete. They are apostolic in their faith and faithfulness. As we listen to their theories of life and watch the glow of fervour burning in their eyes it is easy to picture Paul and his colleagues in Ephesus and Corinth challenging the world with an indomitable faith. These are the men who, with poets and singers, sweeten life and keep it redeemed from the sordidness of lust and success. One man talks of Jesus in the terms of an intimate friendship, and his voice grows soft as he tells of the Comrade that has made life new for him; another talks of the New Age that must ensue from the acceptance of his philosophy. There will be no want, no sorrow, no war. All tears shall be wiped away from every eye. The eloquence of others is in their life of superlative self-sacrifice. They ask little save only the opportunity to serve. They have surrendered their personality to their purpose, and the Cross is the symbol of their life. They have been crucified with Christ. Men and women whose feet might have trodden the easy way of affluence have deliberately chosen the straight and narrow way which, they believe, leadeth unto Life. Nowhere in the world are there more glorious companies of dreamers of dreams than in this London which seems so wayward and so wanton.

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Amongst the passers-by we continually encounter surprise. In the company of sinners we find strange gleams of heroism and goodness, and amongst the official saints we encounter the cynic and the snob. Perhaps too constant a contact with the higher verities disturbs the more human reactions, and philanthropic endeavour linked on to professional rewards has a tendency to become self-centred. A super-cynic can be a Doctor of Divinity, and a social outcast can be a Doctor of Laws who, responsive to a great emotion, was found in circumstances that were suspicious and he paid the price of an atonement for sins he did not do.

The successful man in his limousine and fur coat was merely cool-blooded enough to invest his soul in marriage, and the failure is the Whitehall clerk who turned aside from a promising career to marry the typist whom he met in war-time. The former finds an outlet for his energies and his wife's money in strenuous efforts towards a baronetcy and the latter finds his consolation in the chatterings of little children.

The religious widow of fortune hastens back from Rome for the Easter services at the ornate church at which the vicar, whom she adores, presides, and in a spiritual ecstasy she finds some fleshly delights. The widow-woman with her bundle of sewing hurries by to the middleman for whom she labours till the twilight. For her there are no spiritual consolations to coincide with sensuous joys. Match-sellers wait by the termini of trains and trams and buses, and flower-sellers by the fountain at Piccadilly. Gutter-merchants line the roadway east and west from Hyde

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Park Corner to the Bank, and itinerant musicians create melodies on many instruments.

Here are all the problems of ambition unrealized, efforts uncrowned, patience unrewarded. The dreams of long ago are lying by the kerb-stones as the dreamers wait and wait. There is one who has waited at Ludgate Hill for many days, and I look for him always as I pass. He stands close by a dust-bin into which is poured the rubbish of a London street. Is he a symbol of one angle of human life? Has the dust-bin become a symbol to him and has he chosen his pitch because of its symbolism? I think it may be so, because I have looked at the lines upon his face, and they are not the lines of lust. Is this one of the failures of the world?

Days speeded into months and years, and somehow he missed that tide that is in the affairs of men, and on Ludgate Hill close by the dust-bin he stands as a symbol of the mystery of human destiny. For, was it not written by one of the wisest, "The race is not to the swift nor the battle to the strong"?

To know London is to find pity. To know its problems is to know pain. To watch its teeming millions in the rush of the busy day and in the fever of its restless nights is to learn this truth, that there is needed for each of us some link to bind us to the Unseen and the Eternal. In our triumphs there is need of some restraint, and in our failures there is need of a consolation and a great faith till the day break and the shadows flee away.

CHAPTER XVI

LONDON'S TRIBUTARIES

LONDON may be called a mighty river, and the hamlets, villages and cities that pour forth year by year their native-born, the tributaries of the river.

It has been said that London's natives die out in the third generation and that the New Londoners that are born are destined to an identical extinction. Yet in spite of this somewhat gloomy forecast, London shows no sign of a provincial boycott by those who deserve to perpetuate their name and race. The dictum seems to be accepted by the Provinces, that posterity has done nothing for us! The generations come and go and London's ascendancy over all cities is never challenged. I doubt if there is any parish within the British Isles that has not a representative woven somewhere into London's many millions. There are, perhaps, more Irishmen in London than in Dublin; there are certainly more Scotsmen than make up the capital of Northern Britain.

This blending of provincial characteristics, local methods, angles of vision, geographical and historical associations, consolidates and intensifies the oneness of

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the English, the British people. London represents the essences of the numerous counties. Exaggerations of languages and metaphors, of points of view and prejudices, are toned down, and there are those who claim that London has the cream of the English, Scottish and Irish counties. Nor must I omit Wales. London is Great Britain and Ireland. All the provinces and ridings are in London, all the counties and boroughs, parishes and town-lands. London destroys none, she accepts all and accepts them gleefully. And a complex company will glorify Yorkshire to-night and Devon to-morrow night, and on Sunday night they will sing "The Hills of Donegal." And all the counties and boroughs will symbolize the unity of Londoners in the latest ditty from the music halls.

Local associations and tradition live together, not in conflict, but in mutual respect. And once a year Englishmen eat haggis and drink Scotch whisky with éclat. At the Irish Club the complexities of English and Scottish counties—British to the bone—at the end of a St. Patrick's dinner join hands with Irishmen and sing :

"God save Ireland ! said the heroes,
God save Ireland ! say we all.
Whether on the scaffold high,
Or the battlefield we die,
O ! what matter if for Erin dear we fall !"

When Southern Ireland learns to sing the "Boyne Water" and Ulster can join in "The Boys of Wex-

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ford"—Ireland's two capitals will be blended into one and it won't matter which one it is!

Kilkenny might become a suggestive compromise. London does not bother about historical blunders or mistakes. There are new ones enough to be dealt with day by day, and even Bannockburn leaves London amused. Old feuds must die some time and it is better to let them die soon. If London nourished provincial prejudices it would be safe neither for democracy nor aristocracy.

What is the impulse that drives men from their kindred and native shires to dwell with strangers in a wilderness of streets?

Many come as lads, for there is a restlessness in youth and a response to every challenge of adventure. Tales of London are told by every fireside, and those who have left the country-side are invested with success and honour and wealth. When the London-dweller comes back at Christmas-time he is welcomed as one who has brought distinction on the neighbourhood. Ambitious lads are impressed, and very subtly the lure of London works in a lad's imagination. Through boy clerkships in the Civil Service or promotion to the London branch of their Bank or firm, they hurry to this wonderful city, which holds for them fame and fortune and happiness. They leave the homestead as heroes and this endures for a few holidays, but London is a place of disillusionment.

The streets are not paved with gold and the gaieties of life are reserved for the fortunate. It takes character and grit to hold on in the early, lonely days,

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for the brilliant promises and prospects become very drab and disappointing. London is a testing-place of principles. And for a stranger there are very few conventions other than those recorded in Police Acts and Public Statutes. These set up a lower standard of morality than most of us profess, and a man can go far into the territory of sin before he meets a member of the Metropolitan Police who will take him to the place of public judgment. There are long twilights and longer nights in London, and the hours of leisure are often barren of interest and friendship. A lonely man has a hunger for companionship as insistent as his hunger for bread, and in a wilderness hungry men are often asked to make stones into bread. The essentials that satisfy heart-hunger are round about, and all is so natural from the craving to the satiety.

There is an endless sifting of souls. One sees it going on through the day and the night. In the office, on the street, by Piccadilly in the gloaming. The experienced can pick out the novitiate as he wanders through the long streets. He is at Oxford Circus looking this way and that; he drifts southwards and waits by Leicester Square; he drifts northwards by Charing Cross Road and westwards by Shaftesbury Avenue. Back again at Piccadilly Circus, the pivot of gay, reckless, wild delights, the starting-place of many towards the going down to the chambers of death.

But great fights are fought in the blazing lights, and many are the victories. All youth is not sowing

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to the flesh. There are many who are sowing to the spirit. Imperious manhood is being woven on this strange loom of London's streets and squares.

Clean rivulets are flowing into London's river. These are the provincial tributaries that enrich with character, stability and honour the Metropolis. And London offers her prizes to those who claim them. Outside well-defined limits there is a free field. It would be idle to deny that there are prizes and honours with the distribution of which neither capacity nor ability are gravely involved. But those are very limited and of little account in a big world.

The men of London who are prominent in civic, professional and commercial life, are those who have climbed the ladder of fortune through good and evil report. They equipped themselves by knowledge, effort and self-restraint, and in due course they reaped their reward.

The humble cottages of Scottish highlands and lowlands, the Presbyterian manses of Scotland and Northern Ireland, the lesser towns and cities of England have been the starting-places of many who have added to the character and achievements of the Metropolis. Their impress is indelible in pulpit and politics, in medicine, journalism and law. And the City itself is almost a Scottish capital.

All these carry the flavour of their ancestry, and at times lads turn back from careers of promise because they are wedded in their hearts to the old scenes and friends and associations. These things are better, they think, than great riches.

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In one of the grammar schools of the North there was the son of a freeman who farmed a few acres on a scattered moor. This freedom carried with it a classical education for the son at small cost, and the lad had great capacities. On leaving school he competed for a vacancy in the offices of a great railway company, and he got the first place. He began his duties in the busy city, and the work was not burthensome to his capacity. But he missed the hills and the spring mornings and the fresh winds across the moorland. He spent his holidays at the homestead and faced the city on each return with a heavy heart. He reflected long on the conflict between life's promise of success and the things that he was missing—simple things that had been the environment of his youth.

He counted the cost and went back to the freedom of the moors. The last time I saw him he was carting dung, but he was whistling as he went, and his face was lit with the light of a complete contentment.

Not long ago I was talking to a well-known doctor who had, at the cost of a great effort, cut his way up from an artisan area of a manufacturing city to the position of physician in the West End. He knew the alleged limitations of the workers, but he knew the compensations; he knew the drab streets of red and yellow bricks and the heavy fogs that lie low across them in winter days. But he knew, too, the simple joys, the small demands that are made on life, the intense and intimate friendships, the loyalty and the sharing of sorrows. He made this confession as we walked on a summer day in Oxford Street: "The

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setting of one's life is a contrast to the old days. This is London ! One has got a foothold amongst its people, and yet I sometimes wonder if it was worth the price. I doubt if it was. There is an intensity of sincerity and friendship in what is called the vulgarity of the poor."

So many men have confessed their doubts about the worth of success that it impels to a consideration of the price that it demands. And these confessions seem to justify the historic interrogation : " What shall it profit a man if he shall gain the whole world and lose his own life ? and what shall a man give in exchange for his life ? " It is, perhaps, all a matter of temperament, and each man must judge of his own tastes and satisfactions, and he ought so to judge.

I have seen much lost through undue regard to parental wishes. This, of course, was in other days. Youth pays less regard to their elders now, and within limits it is well. Youth's personality and tastes are entitled to respect, and in the last resort each must endeavour to shape and fashion his own fortune.

Snobbery has, sometimes, a hand in parental selection, and the decisive question on a lad's career is, " What will the Joneses think ? "

Life will be happier for both elders and juniors when the opinions of the Joneses are less considered. I have seen many futile efforts to make a mechanic into a minister and the seaman into a surgeon. When the revolting son wins success his rebellious spirit is a family glory ; when through prolonged effort to be dutiful he misses his tide for another avocation

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he becomes the family black-sheep. Nothing succeeds like success, and success justifies even political and domestic revolts. Parents are strangely like Governments.

Success, too, brings its own dangers. Most of us think that financial freedom means freedom from all cares and tribulations. It does not. Not seldom it is the beginning of new and more bitter discipline. The man who is winning success is often sobered and disciplined in the process, but the co-sharers of his fortune are not co-sharers in his discipline. It is an old saying that when poverty comes in at the door love flies out at the window. The same can be true of riches. It is not uncommon, but it is very tragic. A man tastes the depths of bitterness when his family becomes ashamed of him and his forbears, and we have seen men building a fortune that was a thick wall between them and their progeny. This is the superlative tragedy of the New Rich.

Not long ago the son of two old provincials who had achieved a great professional distinction was marrying into a family who appreciated his worth, but it was a family that had no social impact with the class to which the old folk belonged. It was a fashionable wedding at a fashionable church with a fashionable congregation, and the old provincials were there as guests. They must be present at the wedding of their boy. At the luncheon afterwards their fare was served in a separate room; for, of course, they were socially impossible!

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The son's distinctions were won out of the scrapings of the old folk, but they could only share in his public reception as witnesses from a distance. Another woman possessed him and she was ashamed of his mother. I imagine in the desolation of her heart the old woman wished she had laid him away in his childhood in the little graveyard by the village church where she could have counted on his love. But this was only a tragedy of the old poor. Ornamental wives become strangely enamoured with the importance of ancestry. They, invariably, are related to the peerage. It may be remotely, but time and distance are only matters of relativity. One daughter of a bankrupt general practitioner became famous for a dictum, "He" (meaning the husband) "supplies the money, but I provide the breeding." Husbands seem to assimilate readily those doctrines of social superiority. And the children, of course, are a little sorry that Daddy has not had the chances of a decent upbringing.

One man when he showed symptoms of disapproval of the new habitués of his home was caustically reminded that his father was only a carpenter. This paternal shortcoming was not compensated by the affluence in which the carpenter's son maintained his wife and children. It is the new social sin that men do not choose their parents with more discrimination.

In London some win success with its elations and its limitations ; others find sorrow and disgrace. In many a hamlet and town London is a place of evil

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omen and with it are suggested the names of youths that were washed under in its black waters.

London offers great prizes, but there are dangers lurking in her streets and by-ways, and the things that are most enduring in her great world are the things that are most winsome in the homelier places of the earth.

CHAPTER XVII

LONDON'S LOVERS

EVERY human experience seems to offer opportunity for misunderstanding and misjudging, and nothing is easier than for age, forgetful of its dreams and illusions, to misjudge youth, and for the sophisticated to attribute motives and impulses of which the unsophisticated are not aware. The cynic sees in an incident elements that the healthy-minded cannot see, and the impure read into gestures and embraces thoughts and desires that never were begotten in the minds of the honourable and the normal.

Youth's conception of love is very far removed from carnal associations. There are basic impulses woven by nature into the texture of the human race—all-compelling, for the fulfilment of her purpose of peopling the earth. There are facts of physiology with which anatomists are familiar and very loathsome sequelæ to misdirected responses to Nature's impulse. But no holy thing has escaped debasement, and nothing of beauty has been spared from its associations of shame. Love is no matter of physiology to youth. It is poetry. Its operations on the mind

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and spirit create a magic world. Nature takes care of the youthful, and she weaves dreams into which the spectre of the carnal, if it enter at all, is transmuted into moods, fancies, longings and expectations that have little resemblance to the coarser expressions of life.

To associate concupiscence with the love dreams of a lad or girl is to rob life of its health and beauty and to forget the glory of our youth. All that youth means by love is ephemeral. It is as real as a dream and as light as gossamer. As enduring as the crimson that bathes the western sea at the setting of the sun. It fulfils its great purpose in a transient phase like the dawn and the springtime and the autumn's mists that gather about the evening-tide.

It is ephemeral, transient, but it is as much an actuality as money, a Rolls-Royce, or the latest quotations on the Stock Exchange. It is an avenue of flowers leading into a land of mysterious beauty; it is a promise of life rich, enduring and self-fulfilled. It is self-sacrificing, self-sufficing. Giving is getting and getting is giving. It is the haven of rest and content, and in the busy hours it is a loadstone that draws us to the realization of the perfect life.

There is no time in those days of glory. A clock is only a convenience, it is not a reality; for time is measured by the intensity of emotion, and the hours of love are shorter than the seconds of pain and disappointment.

It is the human expression of a spring morning, for it is the springtime in the human heart; and all that

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finds expression is the beauty of spring flowers, in the warmth of spring sunshine, in the happiness of birds and flowing streams, finds its counterpart in a lad's heart.

It is cynical and sordid to bring the experiences and falsities of life to judge the loves of youth. Love is a spasm. So be it! It will be disillusioned. So be it! It is founded on the flesh! Ah! Youth does not think so, because youths are poets, not physiologists. Love pays no regard to science. The heart of youth has no knowledge of anatomy, and its eyes cannot read flesh and bone, marrow and mortality into the form and beauty that has transformed life for it.

Science can give ugly names to the glories of life, and youth can transmute scientific facts into romantic glories—fulfilling all the purposes of nature in blindness to its possibilities of sin and shame and filth.

The consciousness of nature's purposes steals very gently into human life, and it reveals its consciousness more often in beauty than in shame. Most men can recall the moment when they knew that she had touched them on the shoulder. Some place, or occurrence, some natural fact or beauty has become associated with that touch, and it is for ever memorable. Some summer day by the banks of the Lagan or the Thames: by the shores of Bangor Bay or Margate or Bridlington-on-Sea. Or the grinding disharmony of a barrel-organ proclaiming the infelicities of the very glamour that was so imperious: "Bill Bailey, won't you please come home!"

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— Absurd, banal, unpoetical, inartistic, but nature takes these banalities and absurdities and weaves them into associated memories that become of the texture of the soul.

What man of us is so eaten with the canker of money or success, or so shattered with the rebuffs of fortune that we do not find, in unexpected places, the stirrings of those happy days of youth? In the firelight at midnight, in the music of old songs, in the catch of a voice or the passing of a strange face in the crowded ways of London.

Thomas Moore touched a universal experience when he wrote :

“ When through life, unblest, we rove,
Losing all that made life dear,
Should some note we used to hear
In days of boyhood meet our ear,
O ! how welcome breathes the strain,
Wakening thoughts that long have slept,
Kindling former smiles again
In faded eyes that long have wept.”

Youth's years are full of a great receptivity, and it is the glad things of life that it gathers into its storehouse. Love is a loom that weaves the bright colours into the web and woof of our lives.

Youth is a time of tempestuousness, and the critical or the unclean may see only the shoals and shallows where it may wreck all its promise. Its fire burns with a most vehement flame. Many waters cannot quench it, neither can the floods drown it. And the record of lost youth is at times tragic and very full of sorrow.

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But love is not licence. It imposes restraints that are indomitable. Otherwise, the history of the thousand homes in London and its suburbs, that have adolescents, would be a record of lust and illegitimate children. Experience tells a tale of happier romance. Love does not spell indulgence, it spells respect, reverence, worship.

There is no more glorious restraint for the unexplored shores of life than the restraint of a glorified passion, and such, usually, is youth's passion. It is clean, clean as the high heavens, holy, pure as the saints are pure, and tender. It is a grievous misconception to view a lad's love from the angle of Piccadilly or Leicester Square.

Life is sweeter than the readers of some Sunday newspapers might suppose. Those records served up for the edification of the soul on the Lord's Day are the trapped filth of half a world.

But disease and dirt are not the normal, and in the relationships of youth there is more cleanness than uncleanness, more health than disease, more glory and pure affection than betrayal and sensual lust.

London is a place of lovers, and the great drama goes on unendingly. Generation follows generation through dreams and domesticity, through gathering years and the last shadow, and it all begins again.

London loves its lovers, and London watches them in their new discoveries of very old ways of expression. We see them every morning at the Tube stations and on the bus tops and at the corner of every street.

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The last look or touch or kiss at 9.30 as they part beside the office door, and both face a long eternity till the 5.15 afternoon express goes homewards. To-morrow will be a repetition of to-day, as to-day is a repetition of yesterday. This is an actuality of achievement of all that poets sing and of all that is gathered up into music. It is the rejuvenation of the world, the recreation of the human heart, the refulfilment of the incident in Eden when Adam found Eve the most desirable and delectable thing in a newly-found world.

This is the dominating fact of life. It keeps the world young and full of hope and faith and endeavour. Love, like death, keeps us human and individualistic. No man in love can lose his identity, his ego : indeed, love is the emphasis of the ego. And the strong compelling qualities of manhood are developed and strengthened in its experience.

It is not a coincidence that this stimulus operates in human lives at the period when decisions have to be taken and resolutions have to be formed. Ambition is nurtured and nourished on the dreams of the heart.

Some youths miss their kingdom of youth by the acceptance of the cynical wisdom of the experienced.

So far as I can judge, the cynical wisdom is usually imparted by their mothers. One of the curious problems that one meets with in life is that mothers are less concerned about their daughters marrying poor men than about their sons marrying rich women.

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I imagine there is an intuition behind the policy because it is almost universal.

They consciously or unconsciously appreciate that to a woman the element of love matters most, and nothing can make up for its absence. There is not the same latitude for women in extraneous adventures. But mothers seem to appreciate the advantages of a wealthy daughter-in-law. Most youths, guided by a more imperious mother, Nature, respond to the selective dictates of their own hearts, and have, at least, the chance of a harmonious life. The fire of passion will grow less ardent, but the attachments, common interests and the deep affection that is greater than passion will take its place. And out of their mutual experiences, sacrifices and forbearings there will evolve the happy comradeship that is life's solace.

It is true that money has advantages, but seldom matrimonially. Subverting the natural order usually results in domestic disorder.

Familiarity breeds contempt where the woman is the master-man. Imagine a man taking pin-money and retaining a woman's respect!

These matrimonial adventures are usually undertaken as an alternative to making a career, and by men who love ease and luxury but who are incapable of earning their price.

Matrimony becomes a profession, but one has to be in any profession to appreciate its limitations.

I knew an undergraduate who was unable to become

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anything else. He was not devoid of physical attraction, and he had those petty and pretty mannerisms that appeal to the feminine mind. He married the daughter of a wealthy man and went to live at her home. The elations of the romantic period soon evaporated, and a place was found for the lucky undergraduate. His daily job was to valet and wheel in a bath chair his father-in-law, who was an invalid consequent upon too prolonged and intimate an association with port wine. For reward he was housed and clad and fed, and got four half-crowns per week!!

The popular notion is that a kept man is fortunate and a kept woman unfortunate, but they are really both unfortunates, but in a different way. Some families keep sons-in-law, others prefer hounds; the latter possess a limited marketable value, the former none. I know some sons-in-law that are for sale when there is a market. Hounds possess no side, but both have a certain quality of providing sport in a neighbourhood and are usually referred to as Mr. A.'s property. To be called Mr. A.'s son-in-law has a sense of possession that may not be a component of manhood. But some men are more concerned about a good assurance than a bad reputation, and the dole only becomes disgraceful when it becomes democratic.

Mistakes are made in marriage, and tragedies at times ensue. But there is the likelihood of happiness where there is the compulsion of a great affection. Marriage as an investment could never have gathered

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the associations that created the charm and winsomeness of marriage as presented by Albert Chevalier. He recreated and glorified the sanctified comradeship of shared joys and sorrows, laughter and tears. He made marriage into a superlative sacrament. The story is told that one night whilst he was singing "My Old Dutch" in a music-hall in East London, an old fellow put his arms around his old wife's neck and kissed her before the crowded gallery :

"Aye, lass, it's true!" he shouted, through his tears.

And it is not the ring of golden coins that steals out of the heart and melody of Harry Lauder as he sings that simple epic of Eternal Youth :

"I love a lassie, a bonny Hiellan' lassie,
She's as pure as the lily in the dell,
She's as pure as the heather, the bonny purple heather,
Mary, my Scotch Bluebell."

I once listened to Lauder in a densely-packed house in the Mile End Road. He came on the stage garbed in his garish yellow kilt and with his distorted, twisted and exaggerated "ash-plant." He was greeted with yells of welcome. At once the shouts began "I love a lassie!" Lauder put up his hand for silence, and crooned the haunting melody. The audience listened, and one watched the mists about the people's eyes. Lauder was singing just the sweet, homely honest longings of every clean man's heart. Emotion, pure and clean and glorious, swept across the crowd like a gentle wind across a forest—healing and soothing in its effect.

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And Lauder is a great artiste. At the right moment he asked the crowd to sing the chorus with him. The out-of-work, the discharged soldier, the docker and casual labourer of the grey streets of Whitechapel and Mile End and Poplar, sang the refrain of purity and goodness.

I tried to analyse it. I tried to account for it. There was only one clue that saved the situation from absurdity. It was this—The eternal beauty in the pure love of youth.

London is very rich in lovers, because it is very rich in youth. There is no such assembly of lovers anywhere else in the world. And in summer days it is the most obtrusive fact of life. From Shadwell Park to St. James's, from Epping Forest to Streatham Common, from Chelsea Bridge to Windsor. Every open space, every quiet by-way, every reach of the Thames ministering to the love of youth. And in this some see a very sinister aspect of life.

In judging London's lovers, as in judging life, everything depends on the angle of vision and the extent of experience. To judge London and London's lovers by the flare of Piccadilly and by the professional parade at Leicester Square is to misjudge all the sweetness of romance and poetry of the English people. These are the market-places for foul men and hired women. This is not romance, but lust commercialized.

The lad and girl dreaming in the gathering shadows of Hyde Park or by the bridge at Molesey Lock have thoughts very far removed from Piccadilly. And the gentle touch of a pure girl's hand is richer

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in emotion and glory than all the studied sensualism of the harlot. These finer phases of youth's emotional life are blunted or lost in some, and they see in the relationship of youth only the coarser essences of the flesh.

Love is a perfect poise. It is the superlative dynamic, creative but characterized by a great restraint. It is daring and impulsive, but it is limited in its operation by the quality of its virtue.

And, so far from youth's love being debased, it is a sanctuary, and thousands have found in it an anchorage in life's tempestuousness.

It is a great tribute, and it is true, that is paid to London's lovers by a German sociologist in a book, "England after the War," recently published.

"Anybody, however, who strolls into Hyde Park on a summer evening learns to alter his views concerning both the coldness and the prudery of the Englishman. They who love and have no other refuge, forgather here and make love to their hearts' content—not in furtive couples here and there, but in hundreds, wanton and unashamed, and nobody is scandalized.

"An attendant passes to and fro, and levies toll on those who take a chair on to the grass; otherwise there is no interference.

"After sunset it is a Lovers' Free State here, just as it is every livelong Bank Holiday through on the bushy slopes of Hampstead Heath, and elsewhere on this island where the grass grows green on a patch of free land.

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“But the street, like the ball-room, has its unwritten law, and it is obeyed. For in this country the conduct of the individual is still regulated by convention—the concomitant of freedom.

“A second inward factor works still more decisively to this end, and that is that in sex matters these remarkable people carry a moral precept in their very blood.”

All this is a phase in personal evolution. It has its brief day, a glorious day, but it cannot be prolonged. It finds its fruition in social obligations, in the form of domestic attachments, children, and the hundred experiences of joy and sorrow, laughter and fear, that accompany them. They are social burdens, but they produce a richer character than their avoidance; and their compensations are greater than the cost.

Men and women endeavour, at times, to prolong the transitory experiences of youth, and this effort always results in disillusionment and sometimes in tragedy. The Divorce Court is the Gehenna of those who try to experience the characteristics of youth twice in one lifetime. Instead of youth's world of glory, they only find a world of sensualism. There is no more pathetic spectacle in the world than the middle-aged woman emulating the natural grace of girlhood. It is the absurdest of affectations, and the white-haired bachelors of the fifties who haunt hydros and fashionable resorts in quest of favours and flatteries are a demonstration of manhood that has not outlived the period of an awakened sex-consciousness.

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These have escaped social obligations, but they have lost a balanced life. They have become merely the petted idols of unmarried ladies, who are living through an Indian summer.

But the lads and girls of London weave their magic world of courtship. Hand-in-hand they walk in its parks and squares, dreaming of days and years that never were. They build castles in the air and crowd the years to be with efforts and achievements. Their love is an enduring love. In spite of the many stories of mismating and misery told from day to day in Divorce and Police Courts, in trials for murder and wounding, they have the superlative, indomitable faith. It may be that nature creates illusions for her own ends. But the lads and girls believe. And they begin again, each with each, the old epic of Eden.

I am very familiar with the tangled affair that many make of their dreams, and with the heavy burdens that load the back of those who had thoughts of a different future. Perhaps each expected too much in a world peopled with frail men and women. Perhaps one gave too little or the other expected too much.

There is little certainty in our earthly pilgrimage either of health or happiness, good fortune or success. But youth dreams and endeavours, and perhaps the dreaming is richer than any achievement.

Even in the rough and tumble of life as seen in the hardships of East London, love stands the stress and strain of many vicissitudes, and the number of

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those who are faithful and dutiful is greater than the number of those who stray apart.

In spite of economic laws and social perplexities, in spite of shortage of work and food and houses, London's lovers are waiting now by the Thames at Shadwell Park.

CHAPTER XVIII

LONDON'S DEAD

IT may be an optical illusion, but I think it is a trick of associated memories that every time I pass by Bunhill Fields, in the crowded City Road, the tall buildings standing about the graveyard and stretching for miles on every side, fade into nothingness, and I see only green fields and tall poplars and green-black yew trees at the foot of mounds of earth. I have tried to estimate the value of those historic and sacred fields in terms of building sites and eligible offices. I have considered their significance in a busy and over-crowded world where the day's work must be done and the insistent calls of pressing duty must be obeyed. A central situation suitable for warehouses and convenient to the City. London E.C.2 is a world's market-place. The sound of hammer and chisel and the shrill noise of the steam-saws beat about the neighbourhood.

But the drizzling haze of an October morning and the measurements of the crudest commercialism cannot shatter the illusion or efface the memories. And Bunhill Fields refuse to abate their claims to a quiet sanctity or to lower their value as an asset in the wealth of London.

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Of course these are historic Fields, and pilgrims come to this resting-place of the Puritans. It is a section of the tapestry into which is woven the many scenes and efforts of the English race.

John Bunyan sleeps here till the resurrection, and his book is a fragment of his immortality. Bunhill Fields are a symbol like Westminster Abbey and St. Paul's Cathedral, but the humbler dead sleep in the drab environment of the City Road. In death as in life they stand apart from the glittering splendour of the world.

St. Paul's is the hostel of the distinguished and the mighty. Banners stained with the travail of battles, the emblems of guns and swords and all the weapons of war, gather about the dead. On all sides the dead are heaped up, but there is space enough for the living to worship beside them.

The pealing notes of a great organ race through the tomb-stones and rise to the lofty galleries of the Cathedral. It is a pæan of Immortality.

And in Westminster Abbey are gathered the mortal remains of kings and princes. In the lettered stones are written the record of wars and successions and treaties of peace. Poets, too, sleep beside the kings and statesmen. And all that rest here belong to the lineage of the mighty. All save one. There is a grave that makes the Abbey as homely as a village churchyard and tones down the splendours to the essential simplicities of the soul. There sleeps with kings an unknown soldier. The grave is a shrine to thousands. There are some who clutch at any

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escape from the fateful word "missing," and in the grave of the Unknown they find the resting-place of the dust that once enshrined their love and their devotion. There is enough certitude or probability upon which to nurture faith, and faith is the healing water of life ; for it is "the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." It was, indeed, a happy inspiration to gather one unknown man from amongst the thousands who sleep in the soil of strange lands and bring him home to sleep amongst his kindred in our English soil. And its richness lies in the solace and consolation that it gives to the forlorn.

It is an episode of history and will become an association of the Great War, as the *Victory* has become associated with Nelson and Trafalgar. Generations of schoolboys will come to it as to a shrine, and the stories of pluck and endurance will be a stimulus and incentive to our children's children. But the richest significance of that grave lies in this, that Westminster Abbey has become an inheritance to the humble, and a consolation to those who were burdened with a great distress. A ministry shall become an enduring memorial, and a grave that has been accepted as individual shall become a national inheritance.

Bunhill Fields, Westminster Abbey and St. Paul's present death toned by time or garbed in historic associations and with memorable pageantry. Even the unknown soldier was laid in his last resting-place in the presence of kings and ambassadors. It was dramatic in its intensity. Thousands upon thousands were swept by an Empire's emotion. All England

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and the Empire stood still. The accumulated minutes of that waiting throng wove themselves into millions. There was the silence of a thousand years.

Except in these dramatic forms death does not obtrude itself on London. I have never seen a hearse at Piccadilly or the Bank or in the mile or more of intervening streets. Its presence would be an affront, the consummation of bad form. It is so unnecessary, because there are other thoroughfares and there is always the night-time. A funeral cortège in Regent Street would be almost as indecent as a nude man. To make it tolerable would require the presence of kings and cavalcades of cavalry. It is the dramatic and the spectacular that make death decent. And yet all this is of human things the most artificial; it is only a superficial affectation. In fact we treat death with great respect and remember that he holds in his keeping those whom we do not forget.

It is God's-acre that redeems London from its own mightiness and keeps about it the spirit that made the little parish a complete and perfect world. At Putney Vale or Brookwood we touch the same depths of emotion as though we waited by the graveside in some Northumbrian village or a little Irish town. The majestic setting of our lives, the teeming millions, the wealth and traditions of London are forgotten. Associations of familyhood and home, of kindred and people gather round the dead. The material and the mighty hold us much less strongly than we think, and the ministry of death brings a revelation of reality.

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Adjoining the main line of the Southern Railway as the town slides into green meadows, God's-acre stands. I have watched for seven years the white crosses and granite stones that mark off the sacred holdings, and I see the roses there in summer days and the snowdrops at the dawn of springtime.

Now and then one watches, as we pass, the white-robed priest and the words of the Committal service come whispering out of experience, for we, too, have waited by the steep-side of the damp grave.

"Forasmuch as it hath pleased Almighty God to take unto himself the soul of our brother departed, we, therefore, commit his body to the ground, earth to earth, ashes to ashes, dust to dust, in sure and certain hope of the resurrection to eternal life through our Lord Jesus Christ."

Listen! "And I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me Write, Blessed are the dead that die in the Lord from henceforth. Yea, saith the spirit, that they may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them."

In the gathering shadows of an autumn evening as we hasten homeward after the perplexities of an anxious day strange memories and emotions stir within the heart, and we watch the faces of our fellow travellers and a very little acquaintanceship with life reveals the stirrings that are moving there.

Death is a ministry that keeps life sweet and tender for thousands. It is the most intensely real fact, and, at its touch, most men lose their accumulated

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artificialities. There is about it an experience of breaking the seals of the Book of Life. It lightens up every day of the past. It reveals the hasty words, the forgotten sarcasm. In death's presence these become as vivid as lightning. Death always brings repentance.

I have seen the distinguished surgeon kiss the cold lips of a little old man. Father and son. Science warming the lips of death in a last parting embrace. Death is not merely corruption, for in the touch of an intense and living affection it is swallowed up in victory, and every heart that knows love finds in death an apocalypse. It is either that or despair, because one must consider it. It plagues us and pursues us. Intimate contact with it leaves its mark, and it is usually a benediction.

Sir James M. Barrie reveals its dramatic touch in "How My Mother got Her Soft Face." Her boy David was thirteen, away from home, when the evil tidings came. "I have been told the face of my mother was awful in its calmness, as she set off to get between death and her boy. We trooped with her down the brae to the wooden station, and I think I was envying her the journey in the mysterious waggons. . . . Her ticket was taken, she had bidden us good-bye with that fighting face which I cannot see, and then my father came out of the telegraph office and said huskily, 'He's gone!' Then we turned very quietly, and went home again up the little brae. But I speak from hearsay no longer; I knew my mother for ever now."

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Death comes, too, as a deliverance. And that is not the least of its beneficent ministry. Most of us live too far away from a burdened humanity to appreciate its fullness of beneficence. London with its wash of a world's failures gathered into hospitals and asylums, workhouses and gaols, wounded in body and sick in soul even unto despair, unwanted and unwelcomed anywhere or by anyone. Who can view death as other than a deliverance in circumstances like these? At the least, life's fitful fever is over. And some say that it is the punishment for sin. Speculative philosophy that breeds fear has less than no utility, and somehow nature soothes the weary as they wait at the shadowy gates. I have never seen terror on the face of the dead. The countenance is suggestive rather of rest and content.

But into those regions of shadows it is futile to press. An impenetrable mist hangs low across the confines of the world. Death is continually reaping its harvest till the fullness of time. It reaps in the city. It reaps in the halls of gaiety. It reaps in the overcrowded slums. But it is a fact of human existence like love and goodness and laughter and joy.

Out of its mystery terrors have been woven, just as men once dreaded the sun and the thunder. Perhaps our fears are just as futile and foolish as were theirs; for the sun and the thunder are healing ministries unto life.

In my youth death was a weapon with which we were beaten into virtue, and a lurid light was thrown

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across its benign ministry by the apostolic admonition, "After death the judgment." But judgments are not postponed; they are uttered and recorded and executed before we plumb the damp depths that have been dug for us under the green sward. Death is escape from judgments and executions. Was it not written, "She sleepeth"? Indeed, death is kinder than life: she is first sister to sleep and rest and dreams. There is nothing tragic or dramatic about her coming. She steals across the body and the mind like an uprising mist, and then there is silence and an unbroken peace. It is a curious experience to watch the great ministry of death; to hear the last breath; to look upon the face that a moment ago was living, that a moment after is only dust.

There is no terror in death, no darkness, no horror. It is falling asleep—a long sleep after a weary, troubled day—a longer sleep and a longer rest. The day's work is done, the day's pain is eased, the day's load is lifted.

This is the only human experience in which I have seen no conflict, no contradiction, no confusion; and my fingers have closed the eyelids of scores of those who slept. Nature, in her infinite wealth of adaptation, fits mood and mind and body for the call. It is only those who wait in the shadows of life that mourn.

At times there is a touch of a wonderful and intimate domesticity, recalling the last day at school or the eve of one's embarkation for a far country. Men call the Great One "Sleep" and the unknown place

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"Home." The imagery transforms everything. It alters our standards of value, it tears the realities of a fevered day and treats with levity our economics and our politics.

I witnessed once the passing of a day labourer in a cottage on a quiet moorland. It was the spring-time. The wind blew into the little room with its glorious promise of summer and flowers and the melodies of birds. Everything on the moorland was thrilling and throbbing with life, which is the eternal antithesis of death. And, strangely enough, it was of life that the weary man spoke. He said there is no death.

He had been poisoned by sewer-gas, and one of his eyes was excised. In the end consumption supervened. The poor, wasted, disfigured body was without beauty, and only acquaintanceship with the spirit that dwelt within it spared it from the revulsion of the horrible. The damp lank black hair, whitened here and there, was steeped in perspiration induced by the frequent coughing and all his teeth had rotted to the gums. His smile was a ghastly and tortured disfigurement.

The anguish of his family touched him: he was sorry for them and smiled again and again the reassurance of his confidence and his sorrow for their grief. In husky words dragged from the depths of his throat he spoke of home and happiness and surcease from pain.

The thing that men dread he welcomed as a friend and a deliverer. And in the long twilight as he

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watched and waited for the coming of death there stole into my memory lines that I had learnt in my far off childhood :

“ Who fed me from her gentle breast
And hushed me in her arms to rest
And on my cheeks sweet kisses pressed ?—
My mother.”

Even so was it with death.

Where did he find his philosophy ? Now and then it comes back to me—Did he know ? Whether it be illusion or fact or fancy, yon philosophy on the uplands of Northumberland was life's superlative and supreme possession.

It seems that nature gathers to her great heart all her weary children. Perhaps most of our sins and shortcomings are less tragic than they seem, and our repentances, if not spectacular, are sincere and complete. There is, perhaps, a greater repentance in the gay world than appears to the superficial and the religiously cynical. I see it very often in the dock. Silent, secret unfathomable repentance of which the tongue speaks no word. Christ's children are more numerous than we think.

Judgment by virtue of environment gives no clue. Again and again one has felt the foolishness of a hasty judgment, in some strange place or in some gay throng. But we were there in that place, and in those circumstances longing for Life's treasure and endeavouring to lift our purposes to some loftier plane.

Life is disciplining every one of us. No experience leaves us unaffected, and each experience has a definite

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relation to Life's purpose concerning us. Predestination? Yes, perhaps. But behind all, in all, through all there is a magnificence in humanity that will one day be made manifest.

Death is a bit of the highway through which we pass to the finding of the Glory.

London's dead hold the living within her crowded busy by-ways as little graveyards in Sussex or Dumfries or Antrim hold the hearts of those of us who have wandered far away from the old haunts and habitations. There is a strange fascination in the dust of our kindred, and men have travelled half the world to pay their tribute to old associations.

And behind all the tumult and fever of London the simple facts of life hold the longest, and the greatest of these is love and kinsmanship.

CHAPTER XIX

LONDON'S CHURCHES

LONDON is crowded with churches. They are the most arresting edifices in its highways. In viewing the Metropolis from some tall building it is the churches that stand like landmarks in the vast wilderness of streets. Their architecture is as varied as are their faiths, and their faiths are the expression of human experiences in the quest for God and Immortality. But they are not merely empirical, they are esoteric. They are not only landmarks of history and dogmatics, they are the embodiment of a challenging philosophy and the revelation of a way of life. They have a relation to the present and the future as well as to the past.

London would be, architecturally and historically, the poorer for the loss of the churches. From Westminster Abbey to Wesley's Chapel in the City Road; from St. Paul's Cathedral to Surrey Chapel by Blackfriars Bridge.

A little squalid edifice of yellow brick and basement lecture-halls gathers up associations and inspirations that are very rich and real to thousands. It is the cathedral of a Nonconformist body, and is the

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expression of the faith for which their fathers suffered.

For many, memories are the salt of life. The religious associations of childhood and youth are a determining factor in ecclesiastical attachments, and reverence for the old walls have held men to an intimate relationship with churches when there was little left of the living form of faith. There is nothing ignoble in such association, and it may be one expression of an appreciation of issues that are more enduring than the need of daily bread.

How much more appeal to historic association must be embodied in Brompton Oratory and Westminster Cathedral of the Roman Catholic faith and in the Cathedrals of the English Church from Durham to Canterbury.

The tall spire of Salisbury makes a strange appeal even to those who have no associations with the English Episcopate. And from the Scottish Borders to the Channel every little parish has its church, most of them grown over with moss and memories, and burial-places and village greens. The church is the centre of the life and culture of the parish, and within its walls are sanctified all the intimate relations of the people. Baptisms, Churchings, Confirmations, Marriages, Sacraments, and Burials. The Church flung the dignity of her long traditions and her unbroken ministry about the common life of the people. Her ministry was without favours. She recognized no social distinctions, and the lowly toiler of the hamlet was laid in his resting-place with the same words of a

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triumphant hope of immortality as the lord of the manor.

The human mind is given to speculation, and men's expressions of truth vary with experiences. The intellectual approach to the problems of existence here and hereafter offers a ready ground for speculation and disputation. The theories of the schools percolate to the village greens, and by the window of the village cobbler there are disputes on issues that are eternal in their evasions and mystery.

All this adds just the touch of conflict that stimulates mental activity and of comedy that brightens the monotony of village life. Bethels grow up, each the embodiment of some principle of theology or church government, and the justifications of each are contained in the words of the Holy Scriptures.

There are remnants of those dissensions in our own time, but remnants only.

The era of theological and governmental disputation is over. The pressure of the complexities, social and economic, of the modern world is compelling a consideration of points of unity rather than points of difference. The churches have ceased to be the philosophers and guides of the people. The whole modern trend is away from the ecclesiastical influences. Some clergy have tried to counter this by the introduction of popular attractions, and they have established services and associations that savour of an emasculated music-hall or the *palais de danse* ;

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others attack their brethren in the Lord and in attack they gain publicity.

The sickness of the churches is deeper than any issue of attraction or counter-attraction, and the cure is not to be found in the adoption of the cinema.

No men are faced with sterner obligations or vaster problems than the clergy of every denomination. They merit neither the recrimination of the laity nor the sneers of each other. The older methods of revival that were so acceptable to the Victorians meet to-day with no response. The "Sankey and Moody" appeals would fall upon deaf ears in the Georgian era, and those who practise Victorian methods find the chief response from those who come to give encouragement. Sincere men are brooding over the problems of empty pews, financial strain and the complete irresponsiveness of the people.

The London of the churches is a London of heart-break. Spasms of pessimism sweep over men's souls at times, and their faith almost totters. With few exceptions the workman is well worthy of his hire, and often it happens that the hire is that of a day labourer.

There has arisen a new basis of appeal. The older preacher laid his emphasis on personal duty. In our time there is a clamour for social and economic rights. The older preacher made the subject of his evangel redemption and sanctification from sin. In our time the world's wrong is alleged to be due to economic and international conditions. We have lost the sense

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of sin and personal responsibility for moral wrong. Perhaps the relation between the old and the new is one of cause and effect. Perhaps the old had too much concern about the New Jerusalem and the modern has too much concern about Poplar and the Clyde. The detachment from the world of actualities was the fault of the church, and attachment to the world of things material may be the fault of the new enthusiasm.

I wonder if the Labour Party is aware that its success is just the measure of the church's failure. There are thousands who are hoping that a new political party will achieve what they could not get from a historic church. It is true that a good deal of the moral dynamic of the social gospel is a direct product of the Christian ideal.

The Christian conception of the sanctities of human life occupies the forefront in their enthusiasm, and it is of the fulfilment of this Christian ideal that they dream. Jesus had a very definite teaching in relation to money and social service, and even St. Paul in his attempt to reduce the Christian Ethic to a philosophy kept prominent this living fellowship. Nothing can transcend the essential brotherhood of his letter to Philemon.

The revolt from personal salvation and too intense a brooding on the Eternal Home that were characteristic of our immediate forefathers, was bound to come.

I recall a philosophic shoemaker who had travelled far into cynicism *via* gospel missions and socialism

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giving this considered judgment on the issue of "How to get the people to church." "Hit them on the stomach with a four-pound loaf." There is material for reflection in this cynicism both for the leaders of the churches and the leaders of the Labour Party.

Christianity, or rather the Christian Ethic, has a very definite attitude to economic problems, but it has one equally as definite in relation to personal character.

It has dogmatic pronouncements on wealth, but it too has dogmatic pronouncements on sin. It is the spiritual limitations that induce the economic wrongs. A Communist may overlook fundamentals as readily and as disastrously as a Plymouth Brother or a Strict Baptist. It is dangerous to inflate the multitude with expectations that cannot be fulfilled. And even vague, unformulated dreams can become dangerous. It is a historical commonplace, which the Gospels illustrate dramatically, that the crowned Hosannah of a day can be vilified and rejected by those who crowned Him.

The problem that faces London's churches is no less than this—Jesus and the Modern World.

Piccadilly, Poplar, Cornhill and the Royal Exchange. This raises a riot of conflicts—wages, profits, rents, cost of production, distribution, overcrowding, sweating, drunken dolees, shirkers, club loungers and social loafers of high and low degree. It impinges on everything that concerns man and God.

It is perhaps worth while considering the personal

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and social polity of Jesus. If it has relation to the modern world it ought to be considered : if it has no relation to modern affairs no good can be served by hypocritical pretence. If the philosophy of Jesus is effete in a world of actuality let us bury his precepts in his tomb in the Garden.

The definite aim of Jesus was to make the world better. Whatever the achievement may be, that, at least, was his aim. And he was no philosopher detached from the grim and cruel facts of life. The pages of the Gospels throb with pain, misfortune, sorrow, sickness, want. He was familiar with and took cognizance of the problems that have a strong resemblance to those that press so actually on our modern civilization. He was in as intimate touch with life as Mr. Sidney Webb or Mr. George Bernard Shaw. The geographical and political setting was different, but the problems seem identical with those that harass London.

The sympathies of Jesus were with the poor. He was moved with compassion ; Jesus wept—so it is written in the records.

Jesus claims to have a philosophy that makes for an ordered and happy world. He took the facts of life in all their confusion and complexity, and he teaches a polity that, he claims, meets them and transmutes them. What is it ?

1. The nature of God. Behind all the bewilderment of the world there is God, and his essential nature is Fatherhood—as the fullest and intensest reality.

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2. The nature of man. Each man is a son of God and a brother to each other man. Sonship involves brotherhood.

Those two facts constitute the essential relationship, and nothing can alter them. Jesus reduces life into terms of intimate domesticity, and to all the social, national and international problems he brings the one test and the one solution.

In the modern world it all sounds like the most unqualified moonshine, and our methods of approach to industrial and international disputes are the antithesis of this gospel and polity of Jesus. The chief belligerents in the World-war were one body in Christ !

In spite of the cynicism of events men still dream dreams. The League of Nations for international affairs and altered forms of government for domestic felicity.

The world is deluged with oratory. Each man has his own panacea for the woes of a bewildered humanity. Communism, Economic Changes, Munroe Doctrines, Resolute Government, Unlimited Concessions, Doles or Institutional Treatment. What fits one does not fit another, and the comrades of yesterday become the enemies of to-morrow. A mad medley of confusion, self-interest, self-delusion and hypocrisy.

Forms of greed, individual and international, camouflaged into terms of high ideals and moral virtues, used as a cloak for gain. An unresponsive government is heartless and inconsiderate to the poor ; a

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generous one is exploited by the thriftless and the idler.

Every attempted solution of one problem discloses a new one, and life seems to move in a vicious circle of disillusionment. I have seen as many disillusioned Socialists as Seventh Day Adventists, and a cynical Conservative for every Liberal who had lost the faith.

Was it an accidental thing that Jesus took no concern of forms of government and established no institution? So far as I can see he took no care that even those words that are gathered up into the Gospels should be preserved. All that he definitely bequeathed to the world was the symbolism of his sacrificial life and death. And his simple philosophy and poetry that were treasured in honest hearts have become the body of dissection for unsympathetic critics and materialists. He formulated no philosophy. He founded no institution. He bequeathed to the world a living Spirit. "I will send the Paraclete." Is this promise a lie that has roamed the world for 1900 years? That was his equipment and that his promise. He made no attempt to get a following *en masse*. Whatever he was, he was no demagogue, for he saw the danger of mass psychology—that final appeal of modern idealists. On the contrary he painted a straight and narrow way and spoke of the place of service in the metaphor of the Cross. His conditions for the New Age are in dramatic contrast to the easy way of the moderns. And it is a bloodless revolution.

Jesus and Lenin—the eternal antithesis of Jewry.

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One the Prince of Peace, the other red with the fury of fire and blood.

Wealth, instead of being the desideratum of life, he burthened with responsibilities of a terrible import, and in the parable of Dives and Lazarus he depicted possibilities that should cause the prosperous to think.

Is it economic nonsense and spiritual sanity—that it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter into the Kingdom of Heaven ?

Is it a challenge to modern “good form” that publicans and harlots go into the Kingdom before the respectable and the reputable ?

He makes it clear that according to his philosophy the new age will not follow merely altered laws of Production and Distribution. He neither accepts nor challenges the principles of John Stuart Mill, nor does he accept in their entirety the practices of Poplar.

Wealth is neither the fruition of life nor the solvent for the world's distractions.

There is no loveliness in abject poverty, but there is less in illimitable wealth. Poverty may kill the body, but wealth withers the soul like a leprosy.

His conditions of life are universal in their applicability. He submits the same principles to rich and poor alike. The peerage and the proletariat must accept the same laws and respond with the same obedience. And it is an equal discipline for both. On reflection one can see here a law of the most revolutionary import. Entrepreneur and Communistic

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leader under the same restraints and called to a common service. Co-workers with God in Christ ! Superman and Underdog—co-heirs of the promises !!

To suggest that Jesus has failed is dramatic nonsense. His name is writ large in history and in experience. The testimony of those who have had intimate association with the poor, the dying, and the lost, with those who have suffered the loss of friends and fortune and health know where the consolation was found. "I am the Resurrection and the Life" has been the only light in a dark world. We need a new aspect of him, but we do not need a new Jesus.

In an age like ours, where life is less simple and local, and the complications of social and economic affairs are intense, there is need of a new emphasis on the social implications of the Gospels. The ecclesiastical Jesus has to become the economic Jesus in our time.

But the Labour Party cannot logically reject the Economic Man without accepting the Man of Nazareth, any more than the Capitalist can accept the Man of Nazareth without rejecting the Economic Man. Both parties to the economic war are faced with the same principles ; but each wants the other to become the first disciple. Nothing less than the operation of some living principle acting directly on the mind of the individual can be effective.

There is need of a living wage. The accepted doctrines of human life make it imperative. But there is need of honest work. The essential principles of discipleship make it compulsory. And the thrift-

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less, indolent, self-indulgent capitalist is a social parasite no less than the indigent pub-crawler of Dockland. A glorious opportunity of demonstrating a new doctrine of relativity and attaching to human life a new sanctity was lost, never to recur in our generation, in 1916. Conscription of manhood and conscription of wealth should have been simultaneous, and as the age of recruiting went up the area of fortune should have gone down. The older men should have been conscripted side by side with the lesser fortunes. It remains an ugly commentary on values that capital was sacred and international but human life was merely patriotic.

That conscription of wealth would have led to grave economic and commercial issues is admitted, but none more grave than the havoc that was consequent upon the calling to the colours of middle-aged men with domestic obligations.

The economic man of John Stuart Mill is in conflict with the ethics of Jesus. Therein lies the whole problem of the church and society. Mill builds upon a postulate that has become a passion, Jesus on an ideal that has ceased to be a gospel. The pursuit of wealth is almost a condition precedent to the pursuit of virtue, and the pursuit of virtue, later on, is either an affectation or a bribe to Fate.

The problem of society and the problem of the individual are one and indivisible. What is right for the individual cannot be wrong for society, and what is harmful for the community must react on

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individuals. The principles of Jesus are the solvent for the conflicts of self-interest.

There is one striking fact in the quick response of the poor to moral ideals. I think this was demonstrated in the propaganda for the social programme of Mr. Lloyd George. He took the homely parables and principles of Galilee and made them the elements of his policy. They were homely, but they won.

I am not attempting to justify either the methods or the achievement: I am indicating the response of the people to a moral ideal. Therein, I think, lies the hope of the future.

The principles of Jesus seem unique in this that they take cognizance of and make provision for the frailties of humanity. He uses the dramatic metaphor of nativity. We must be reborn.

"That which is born of the flesh is flesh, that which is born of the spirit is spirit. Ye must be born again."

And in contact with the wash of the world's lost children—without ideal, hope, strength, help; with diseased will and body—some supernatural experience would seem essential. As one watches day by day this endless parade, it is a spectacle of utter despair.

No altered forms of government or economic environment can effect salvation. Neither can they prevent the problems of transgression. And any brightness that enlightens the gloom, as we touch the off-scourings of the Metropolis, shines from the Face of Him who said "I am the Light of the World."

The older expressions of piety in their conventional

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behaviour and assumed righteousness have vanished. Perhaps in the living spirit of human relationships we may discover the essentials of religion pure and undefiled. In the last analysis the real conflict is Force versus Love. And Force has failed.

CHAPTER XX

THE LOOM OF LIFE

NOTE.—The *locus* of this Chapter is not London, but the problem is the problem of London because it is the problem of humanity.

IT is a curious belief that the days of childhood are always golden, and that its nights are woven out of dreams. No shadows are supposed to fall upon that sunny land. There is only laughter and love and warm embraces; and if, perchance, tears do come, they are but the prelude to a large joy. It is a curious belief founded on the romantic touch that Time gives to the things that lie far behind us. The actual passes easily into the idealized, and memory gathers all the best and most glorious out of our experiences, and we call that idealization our childhood.

We have forgotten the things that puzzled us, the inarticulate terrors; we have forgotten that even in those sunny years we sometimes grew afraid.

There was always something cruel for me in the dull grey of a November dawn. It was lonely and heartless and sombre. Without a shaft of light, or joy or hope. When I awoke, I awoke suddenly, every nerve on guard and memory recalling the incidents and details of my ordered life.

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There was some strange sense of impending disaster, some vague, unformulated fear of pain. Perhaps the reactions of life have a fixed and definite relation to experience, and it may be that both are touched and toned by temperament. The same environment and experiences do not seem to produce identical reactions. Analysis and psycho-analysis cannot penetrate far beyond the obvious and the superficial. Personality and temperament add the unknown quantity that forever forbids a Science of the Soul.

Life is strangely inequable. It is malignantly unjust or superlatively magnanimous according to the roadway upon which we go towards the fulfilment of our fate. So it seems. The dramatic contrast between London East and London West, between Millwall and Mayfair, between Cable Street and Curzon Street is determined by other factors than that of volition, and the children of Belgravia and Bow have not selected their respective areas as the playgrounds of their childhood or the environments of their culture.

A November morning always stirs the springs of memory for me, and the impressions are as vivid as were the experiences that begot them nearly forty years ago. These cut so lastingly into the tablets of life that their imprint can neither be eradicated nor blurred.

There were movements, all unconsciously, in those far-off days of what is called philosophy. Very simple facts raised questions, simple facts like snow and sleet and hurrying passers-by and coughing consumptives

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panting down the wet streets. I used to peer through the window and see them under the yellow glare of the gas-light and they held their sides with their hands. Above the clamour and the coughing there was always the loud incessant call of the steam whistle that brought the girls and women to the wet warmth of the mills.

It was this simple thing, happening morning by morning through winter weeks and months, and winter seemed so long with its dark wet nights and mornings, that there came an acceptance of a theory of cruelty that lay hidden somewhere at the heart of life. That hurrying crowd, those coughing girls, were driven by some unescapable thing. Some god, or fate or chance or circumstance made this inexorable decree.

I wondered why. I kept wondering why. The world seemed shrouded in silence, till the silence was broken by hurrying feet. Everything was quiet except the brain of a puzzled child.

Suddenly some straggler who had overslept herself raced against time, and panting past the window, she said to herself, "Christ! the gate will be shut."

And the vivid imagination of childhood was haunted as it listened to this litany of dread morning by morning through winter days that seemed unending.

In the despair of the blasphemy one visualized harassment, dread, hunger, remorse. Why was time so valuable to some people? Why should I be freed from Time's decree? Would I always be free, or might the day come when I should cry into the blackness of November, "Christ! the gate is shut"?

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And there stole into the heart of childhood a terror of life. . . . But it would soon be morning, and one would be with friends and in the light. Then one is braver and less afraid.

I

Ah! but there is another girl racing; she is too late. The whistle has just finished. She stops below the window—"Christ, the gate is shut," and she coughed and panted and spat upon the pavement.

I listened to the panting, and suddenly a stifled cry, half moan, half appeal, shot into the darkness. "Oh! holy Jesus, it's blood," and she spat again.

"Ochone, Ochone. Oh! Jesus, it's blood. Oh! it's blood." The rain dripped on to the window-sill, and silence was about the dark street and the yellow light of a street lamp fell across a crying girl.

"Ochone!" The cry froze one's heart. It was a cry that gathered up unutterable terror, because it was Death laying his hand upon her shoulder and claiming her as his bride, and she knew the road along which Death takes his beloved. He rubs out the brightness of the eye and the red of the cheeks, and he rots the teeth down to the blackened gums. And there is coughing and pain and blood. She waited till she had gathered a little strength and started homewards; and along the dark street she went crooning to herself the litany of her despair. Ochone! Ochone! . . . Ochone! . . . And she wept bitterly as she went.

They put her into the settle bed in the kitchen,

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where there was warmth and company and she could watch the washing and cleaning and cooking. There was no sunshine and little air, and when the family gathered in for food or sleep there was very little room. When the first shock of the hæmorrhage had passed, she grew hopeful of health and strength again, and even had her day-dreams of lovers and happiness. But the hæmorrhage recurred and a period of depression supervened.

So through days of hope and days of depression she lived through one summer, and as the autumn was drawing to a close her weakness increased, and one morning towards the dawn she went with consort Death down into the Valley of the Shadows.

Death gives a strange dignity to a dwelling. The Great Sovereign of the world has come to the home. His presence is felt. Weird, half formulated, shadowy forms take shape. They are the shapes of shadows, and the shadows of shapes. It is terrible, yet not terrible. And gradually things become not normal but less abnormal, and the fixed lines of character grow definite and clear on the dead face. And memory begins its minutes of torture. Words we spoke come back. We didn't mean them, but she didn't know. Words we should have spoken, but left unsaid. We wonder if she knew the impulse that we killed.

Old scenes, old days, old love, old disputes, till the strain is too much, and by the bedside of the dead we wash our sins away in the tears of a bitter repentance. But I think the dead know.

Everybody in the industrial areas of the city is

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familiar with the emotions associated with death, and there is almost a ritual and a liturgy. Undertakers cost money and money is always scarce. They put the dead girl on boards that rested upon tressels, and they covered her with white sheets, white and icy cold. These sheets were consecrated to death and were hired at sixpence a sheet for the three days. They are never warmed with the heat of the living, they were only for the dead.

In the corner of the room was tipped up the black coffin. What a ghastly shape it is! It is the shape of a grave. And on the lid of the coffin, painted on the metal shield in white paint :

Mary Doyle.

Aged 17.

Born 23 May, 18—.

Died 29 Sept., 18—.

Candles were lit around the body, and the relations and neighbours crowded into the room of death in relays. All night long they waited by the dead—cheap port and biscuits and rancid cheese were handed round the room at intervals, and men smoked pipes. Courting couples were seated on the stairs, and in the smell of death and the shadowed light of candles, they dreamed of Love's Immortality. Now and then some shrill soprano would raise a hymn-tune, and the company would take up the melody.

“ Safe in the arms of Jesus,
Safe on His gentle breast,
There by His love overshadowed,
Sweetly her soul shall rest.”

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Then another taking up the imagery of the lost sheep would raise the tune for the company:—

“There were ninety and nine that safely lay.”
And the eyes of the company would look towards the dead girl and wonder if the Shepherd had her safely folded to His great heart.

Hymn after hymn, rich in imagery and hope, floated down the quietness of the dark street all through the night, and weary toilers listened with a longing wistfulness.

“Far, far away, like bells at evening pealing,
The voice of Jesus sounds o’er land and sea,
And laden souls, by thousands meekly stealing,
Kind Shepherd, turn their weary steps to Thee.

“Rest comes at length; though life be long and dreary,
The day must dawn and darksome night be past;
All journeys end in welcomes to the weary,
And heaven, the heart’s true home, will come at last.

“Angels, sing on, your faithful watches keeping;
Sing us sweet fragments of the songs above,
Till morning’s joy shall end the night of weeping,
And life’s long shadows break in cloudless love.”

With a penny per week the dead girl had bought the dignity of a decent burial, and the insurance money bought a grave space for one coffin in a common grave.

Strangers will sleep below her and strangers above her. Even death allows no place for sentiment amongst the poor. In life and in death they are overcrowded. And so between strangers she sleeps till the Resurrection, when God shall have fulfilled the promise of the familyhood of the race.

“When stranger will see in the stranger
His brother, and his sister
In eyes that were strange.”

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And in the morning the mourners went back to their work-places, and so they went day by day and year by year, with interludes of mourning for dead girls who spat blood upon the black pavements.

II

There was another destined to a career little less sorrowful and about whom there could gather less melodious assurances of her safety in the arms of Jesus. She was a girl with wistful eyes and brow always wrinkled with questions that, unconsciously, she put to Life. She was a little Mother of Sorrow, though she was only twelve. At ten she went to the mill as a half-timer, for she was the eldest, and the children came with an unbroken regularity. She was only a child, but she had a passion for "mothering." The weak and tortured, stray animals and little lost children came to her. By some strange magic she gathered to herself the hurt and wounded things of life. Even older folk rested on her quiet strength, and they called her Little Mother. Sacrifice claimed her in many shapes and forms, and to it she responded as though it were her destiny. Self-forgetfulness was her unconsciously accepted Law of Life. One could see nothing more pathetic than the signs of weariness upon her young face. Even in her childhood there were little lines upon the brow and wrinkles round her tired eyes. And, watching her, one tribute sprang into the heart only to be silenced before it was spoken—"Mary! The mother of God."

Long summer days flooded the sombre back streets

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of the city with silver rays. The warmth and the sunshine gave their own beauty even to the dull and drab environment; though the hot atmosphere brought a new misery, and girls coughed their throats clear of the dust that they had breathed since early morning. They smelt of oil—heavy and pungent grease that made them a by-word and wove its horror into an insulting ditty:

“I would rather lie in my bed alone,
Than sleep with a greasy doffer.”

The poetry of childhood was denied them. The glory of meadows full of buttercups, the white lanes with hawthorn blossom, the silver light across the restful river—these were all glories greater than dreams; and even the romance of youth never took on the colours of fancies that make up the richness of human experience. Childhood died before ten and girlhood was never known. All those dreams and phantasies that steal into girls' hearts from nowhere, lighting the strange gleams of beauty in their eyes, and humming in their hearts melodies from the harps of God, were never seen nor heard. There was only left for romance and chivalry, for expectancy and fulfilment—a residuum of natural impulse.

Only far away from its setting can one see beauty in tall chimney stacks and in the herded multitude of workers.

The flowers of life were only withered leaves, for the flowers were blistered when they showed the first bud. The glorious call of nature to adolescence,

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weaving the shapes of clouds into continents or far-off seas and crowding the firelight with forms and fancies of love and achievement—all the glory is blurred and distorted and betrayed.

And in this environment the Little Mother lived and wrought her gracious ministry. Life stirred within her, and the black walls built by some strange law fixed fast the limits of her life. In wet wintry days she toiled, and in long summer days she toiled. Work and want and sacrifice made up her days, and her nights were woven out of an unbroken weariness.

And such was her life when I saw her last as a girl.

One night in the afterwards I was passing through the streets of the city that I had left.

I caught a glimpse of a face that seemed to recall the long-forgotten days. It had the wistfulness, the questioning wrinkles on the brow and the weary lines about the eyes. It was a woman with a soldier in a scarlet coat.

At last the light dawned upon my perplexity. It was Mary the Little Mother. And so they went, the Little Mother and the soldier in the scarlet coat, towards the dark streets in the purlieus of that city, where women are hired for a price. . . .

What purpose, what decree fixed her fate? What was it that set this girl with the gentle soul into that crowded blackened environment to face the world at ten and to be beaten by the tempestuousness of life? What Fate left her with the same untroubled

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innocence as she plumbed the ghastly abyss of harlotry. And often in the firelight when I watch the passing of old faces there comes before me Mary the Little Mother, and I cannot think of her as a prostitute, but as the friend of little children and the hurt and hunted things of life. For perhaps the threads of scarlet are woven on the loom of life for some glory and for the fulfilment of some eternal purpose.

III

On the northern heights of the city there dwelt a girl who, too, had association with its mills, and often she watched the smoke from their chimneys as it curled into nothingness in its flight towards the dwelling-place of God.

She took the mills for granted, as did the other girls. She, also, took for granted the brook that flowed by the bottom of the gardens and the flowers and singing birds, as the other girls took for granted the sweat and grease and disease. The mill and the gardens and the flowers were all woven into one texture, and about them gathered health and romance and happiness. She, too, was on the threshold of womanhood, and nature wove her dreams within her heart. Each step of her life had been guarded. Her body was healthy and beautiful and her mind was a treasure-house of the imagery and metaphors of English poetry; Shelley and Burns, Browning and Tennyson had given expression to her many moods and longings, to her joyousness and wistfulness.

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Perhaps wistfulness was the nearest that she knew of sorrow—that feeling that overshadows the heart when some inexplicable, wonderful thing of joy is known. There was a dance on the northern heights that night that I saw the Little Mother with the soldier in the scarlet coat. It was to mark the betrothal of this girl of the sheltered life to another man in a scarlet coat. It was a gay assembly and it was difficult to think that any shadows fell athwart the distant city in the happy gaiety as the hours trailed their way towards a new day.

All the emotions of expectancy and renunciation that mark the first steps towards the fulfilment of the perfected womanhood thrilled in the air. Lights twinkled along the garden paths and the band played waltzes that touched even the slumbering sentiments of the older women.

The day was over. The glad tidings had been announced to the world, and a happy girl went to dream of life's glory. She drew aside the curtains of her window and saw the haze that gathered over the sleeping city. The street lamps marked like yellow milestones the streets and squares under the cold gleam of the stars in the blue-black sky. Her heart thrilled with the longing of life that is the poetry of youth. An ache of joy, an ache of expectancy, an ache of hope and dreams. Gladness in her heart. A glistening tear that was never shed. Ah! glorious pain of unutterable joy, the birth-pangs of rapturous womanhood. Faces and forms, or rather the suggestion of faces and shapes, stole into the night out of her

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heart's dreams. And she whispered to herself in the silence :

“ Ah ! Life is too glorious ; it is an intoxication of pure joy.”

In her gladness she went down upon her knees by the bedside to give God thanks for the glory and happiness.

She knew nothing of the girl that spat blood upon the pavement of the city. She knew nothing of the girl who walked with the other man in the scarlet coat. But she knew by some strange prompting that Another than herself had decreed the fate that wove for her the glory and the gladness.

At God's feet she acknowledged that her life was fixed by some divine decree.

CHAPTER XXI

L'ENVOI

WHEN Earth's last picture is painted and the tubes are
twisted and dried,
When the oldest colours have faded, and the youngest
critic has died,
We shall rest, and, faith, we shall need it—lie down
for an æon or two,
Till the Master of All Good Workmen shall put us
to work anew !

And those that were good shall be happy : they shall
sit in a golden chair ;
They shall splash at a ten-league canvas with brushes
of comets' hair ;
They shall find real saints to draw from—Magdalene,
Peter, and Paul ;
They shall work for an age at a sitting and never be
tired at all !

And only the Master shall praise us, and only the
Master shall blame ;
And no one shall work for money, and no one shall
work for fame,

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But each for the joy of the working, and each, in his
 : separate star,
Shall draw the Thing as he sees It for the God of
 Things as They Are!

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publishers.

